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ON THE COVER: It's a 350 Alpina, in case you can't tell. Everybody can identify Jim Connolly.

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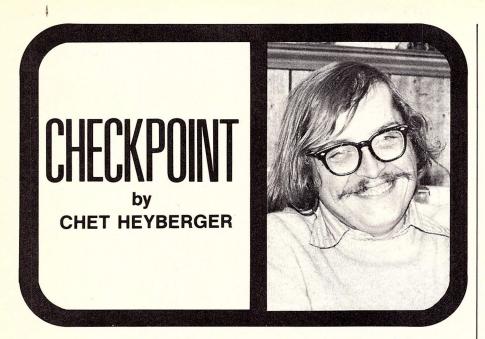
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GETTING TO DO WHAT YOU WANTED TO BE

There's this one question that destroys me everytime I hear it. I mean it. I muddle along — fairly enjoying myself most of the time then some inopportune person blathers it out: "What are you going to be when you grow up?" No

I ignore the question, or laugh, or leave the office and go over to the rec center and trade war stories with the guys from the street bike magazines across the hall.

I'll probably always continue to

ignore that question.

But there are other questions basically similar — that come up in conversation with race spectators or with young riders we meet on testing days. Or they arrive in the morning, along with the normal junk mail.

It usually goes this way: "How can I get to be a mechanic/top rider/ dealer/sponsored racer/factory engineer/test rider/factory wrench?"

There are two ways to investigate and find the answers. One way is to quiz the people who are now what the questioner wants to be. That means talking to someone like Jim Felt (this year's Golden Wrench winner after he tuned Jimmy Weinert's bike to National #1 in motocross), or Tony DiStefano (now a Suzuki-sponsored motocrosser and blowing off everyone in the winter series down in Florida), or Gary Harlow (owner of DG Performance

Specialties, the makers of all those trick 125 engine and suspension parts), or Al Baker (who not only runs his own shop, but is also a Honda-sponsored off-road racer).

So I talk to them.

I find that most of them are where they are because they are doing the thing that they do the best.

Sure there are other considerations. Some inherited a business from their fathers. Some have enormous talents that you wouldn't think are related to motorcycling. Some have super-quick physical reflexes, or high fear thresholds, or maybe only an unjust amount of luck that they can apply directly to riding and racing. But there are others that found natural or learned talents — like a good business sense, or a mathematically-trained mind, or an ability to describe the kinesiology that's going on when they ride - and applied these to motorcycles.

Let me stop and change directions. There's a second way to investigate how to become what you want to be. That's to ask the people with the power to help you become; the people who'll be hiring you.

To do this, I have to talk to Tim Smith (Kawasaki's racing manager), or to shop owners (who may want mechanics or racers), or to the department heads of the factory

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BITS and **PIECES** LEN WEED

It's not pronounced gunner. A few pertinent facts about our new Tech Editor. His favorite colors are blue and yellow. Gunnar won a crosscountry ski championship in Sweden when he was 14, and rode observed trials at the intermediate level. His first MXer was a 175 Husky threespeed with Earle's forks in 1959. He joined Husqvarna on a consulting basis in 1964, the same day he graduated from college with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. He was district champion one year. "Big deal. Hammargren was in Europe."

In the fall of '67 he raced his way through Australia and New Zealand with J.N. Roberts. The pair teamed to win the Mint 400 in the spring of 1968. Gunnar jumped back and forth between the U.S. and Sweden until 1969, when he more or less settled here. In 1969 he was the Canadian Open champion. He took a sixth in the Trans-AMA in 1970, a third in the Inter-AMA in '71 and a ninth in '72. He also served as technical liaison between the factory in Sweden and the American race team in 1971 and 1972 and was the team manager in 1973. During his ten years with Husqvarna before joining Hi-Torque (he'll also be working with the other dirt publication-Cover to Cover MX) he was a member of the research and development team and had a hand in developing the Mikkola GP bike that won the world championship last year. So far he hasn't told us how he got to be the Swedish Meatball King.

Gene Wirwahn, Legislative Director of the AMA, wrote a letter to

Sports Illustrated. We think you should too. The Scorecard section of the January 13, 1975 issue contained a rather one-sided write-up of the Barstow to Vegas race. Here's one of the choicer barbs: "Banning the race altogether might encourage some motorcyclists to go back to their old foraging ways on the desert or join the Hell's Angels on the highways and scare the wits out of all of us. But rather than a mass start, environmentalists suggest compromising further with an "enduro" - a limited number of riders starting a few at a time and running at reduced speeds. This might take some of the fun out of the sport but it would certainly be a lot gentler on the wilderness.'

We might suggest to Sports Illustrated that touch football with no blocking would be a lot gentler on Joe Namath's knees, but we won't.

The address: Mr. Hedley Donovan, Editor-in-Chief, Sports Illustrated, Time Life Building, Rockefeller Center, New York, New York 10020. Refer to "Trade-off with Nature" in the January 13, 1975, Scorecard on page 15.

For the literally tens of you who wondered what happened to "From the Saddle." It was at the bar. Judicial. DIRT BIKE owns it. But what are we going to do with it? Good question. Foofing right along, if you've missed Foofaraw at your local newsstand, go back and look for it. Foofaraw, or just plain Foof as we know it around here, is pure "From the Saddle," "Checkpoint" and other mind-rotting, totally unredeeming foolishness and piddle.



[]

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It's good for you. What next? Barf and Burn.

Here's Russ Darnell's Motocross School schedule for the next few months. Several staffers have taken Russ' course. We can recommend it almost as much as mouth-to-mouth resuscitation or windsurfing Walden Pond. How do you think Chet got to be the Novice Motocross Champion of Puerto Rico? It wasn't all beer and pizza that did the trick.

May 23-24 2-day school Billings, Montana

May 30-31 2-day school Las Vegas, Nevada

June 7-8 2-day school Eagle River, Arkansas

June 16-20 5-day training Saddleback Park, California

June 23-27 5-day training Indian Dunes, California

July 11-12
2-day school
New England (location to be announced)

July 14-18 5-day training Roaring Branch Motosport, Pennsylvania

Roaring Branch Motosport, Pennsylvania July 23-24 2-day school

Honda Hills, Columbus, Ohio

July 28-Aug 1 5-day school Chillicothe, Illinois

Aug 13-14 2-day school

July 19-20

2-day school

Carnegie Cycle Park, Livermore, California

Aug 16-17 2-day school Bend, Oregon

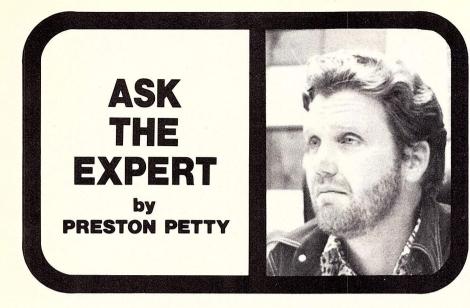
Aug 19-20 2-day school Washougal, Washington

Aug 23-24 2-day school Motocross West, Port Angeles, Washington

Aug 28-29 2-day school Indian Dunes, California Sept 1-5

5-day training Saddleback Park, California

Continued on page 84



SILENCE IS GOLDEN

I have a 1972 Yamaha 250MX. All my neighbors complain about the noise it makes. I have a silencer but the cheap thing has broken into pieces twice. Could you tell me if there is a super-quiet pipe to fit or if the Trapp Silencer by Discojet is a real good silencer? Please, you've got to help me keep peace between me and my neighbors.

Mark Holland Bellaire, Michigan

The Xdusor will reduce the noise to a tolerable level. The Trapp Silencer will work even better. But with any silencer, you should make a secure attachment of the silencer to the frame. Xdusor has an optional center mount kit that clamps around the frame. It might take a bit of welding, but it will hold it on. Very few silencers will stay in one piece if they are just clamped on to the end of the tailpipe. Another trick to help keep the silencer on the end of the tailpipe is brazing a small nut or loop onto the muffler and the tailpipe and using an exhaust pipe spring stretched between them. When the clamp loosens up the spring will still keep the silencer pulled into the exhaust pipe stinger. With this spring and a solid strap mount from the silencer to the frame, you should be able to keep it on intact.

YAMAHA GROWTH KIT

I own a Yamaha 125 AT2 Enduro. Would it be possible to put one of the new 175 MX's barrel, head and piston on it? Would it be necessary

to change the 24mm carb, the timing or the exhaust pipe? With the stock carb and a new pipe, how would the power compare to one of the Yamaha MX175s?

> Ioe Thomas Newton, Iowa

Many of the riders I know who have 125MXs have put Enduro barrels on to widen out the powerband. Since you already have an Enduro, you can enhance its performance by raising the exhaust port 2mm and putting in an MX piston. A 2mm larger carburetor would work well also, along with an MX pipe or a torque pipe. If you've got the money, do the same thing to your 175 barrel and add a 175 MX piston. With this 175 your scoot should be at least as quick as the stock MX 175, but with a wider, more ridable powerband.

THERMO-FLUNK SHOCKS

I have a '74 250 MX and the rear shocks seem pretty crappy. Frequently, it does tank-slappers over fast whoop-de-dos and over fast washboards. Is there any way to fix these shocks, or should I go to Koni or something else? Help.

> John Howe Salt Lake City, Utah

There is a bit you can do to improve the response of the Thermoflow shock. For about \$18 you can get a YZ dampener unit to fit into the Thermoflow shock. This offers better oil control and dampening. Fill them back up with five-weight oil and, if you can get them, try



right down to it, dynos tell it like it is!

* Testing was run at Hooker's California facility, February 18, 19, 20 on a Stuska dynomometer by Product Development Engineer, Dick Lytell. A 1974 Yamaha DT250A Enduro was tested with off-theshelf tuners from Hooker # 26290, Bassani #DT250AB, Torque # 2458 and Yamaha stock, Copies of this comparison are available from Hooker Headers 1032 West Brooks St. Ontario, California 91762.



USE WHAT ROGER USES

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He relies on his machine to run fast and finish everytime. His engine oil is Bel-Ray 2-Cycle Racing Oil because it burns cleaner, boosts power and fights friction to run cooler.

In his transmission is Bel-Ray Gear Oil to absorb gear shock caused

by high-speed shifting.

Bel-Ray Chain Lube is sprayed on. It penetrates into Roger's chain to coat pins and prevent slacking caused by hard racing wear. Roger's Suzuki must also handle—front forks are filled with Bel-Ray Fork Oil and the rear shocks with Bel-Ray Shock Oil. Both Oils are formulated for stable performance without foaming.

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S & W 60-90 springs packed to a 9.5-inch preload. If you weigh around 150-160 pounds, this will work better.

FLAT OUT

I'm presently building a 175 Yamaha half-mile flattracker. I would like to know what frame and suspension parts would be the best for my purpose, front and rear. Bear in mind I'm trying to cut down on weight as much as possible, since I weigh 155 pounds and those little 105-pound flattrackin' freaks are at an advantage.

Mike Kirk Collinsville, Illinois

I would recommend a Track-master frame for your 175 engine. Your stock forks will work fine with a Trickit installed, and a set of S & W or Koni shocks at the rear will make your scoot handle fine for your intended application. With a small plastic tank added and with the Autolube removed, the bike should weigh about 175 pounds.

POWER CORRUPTS

Having read most of the magazines on the market over the years, I am consistently impressed with your common sense answers to the questions asked in your column, and therefore request your advice. I would like to improve the power on my '73 Yamaha 360cc Enduro without reducing reliability too much. I plan to make the following modifications:

1. Install a high-compression head. (The head is a '72 Yamaha 360cc MX head with the necessary cooling fins removed to clear the exhaust chamber.) When used before, I experienced minor detonation at constant throttle and when backing off the throttle. Acceleration was clean and much improved.

2. I plan to knife the transfer ports and clean up all port castings, without changing any of the ports.

My questions are:

1. Since I use the bike for transportation to and from work (five miles), trail riding, short highway jaunts and, on occasion, a not-too-serious competition of various sorts, will the above modifications give me a gain in performance without loss of reliability and still be livable under those riding

Continued on page 96

HOLE SHOT

JOHN ULRICH



STU PETERS AND THE CMC, STRONG NUMBER TWO

This month "Hole Shot" takes a look at Stu Peters and the Continental Moto-Sports Club and tries to find out what makes the CMC one of the most successful racing organizations around. John Ulrich is the moto-journalist who sponsored the piece for us and the photo of John up on top was taken by Gene Romero.

From outward appearances — the big house, the beautiful wife, the Mercedes-Benz motorcar, the cluttered office complete with giggling secretaries and file boxes on shelves marked with state names ranging from "Alaska" to "Washington" — Stewart Peters may not seem much different from other California businessmen at the helm of corporations engaged in interstate commerce. The difference is, Peters and his partner Kelvin Franks are in the business of marketing motorcyle racing.

Returning to Southern California in 1968 after five years of racing the World Championship motocross circuit in Europe, Peters found himself in a part of the world where "motocross" was virtually unknown, and most people raced "scrambles" if they raced at all. Starting out with Kelvin and the idea that the time was right for some organized motocross racing, Peters formed Continental Moto-Sports Club, Inc., and went to work. Now, seven years later, CMC has 20,000 licensed racers, operates in 20 states, and

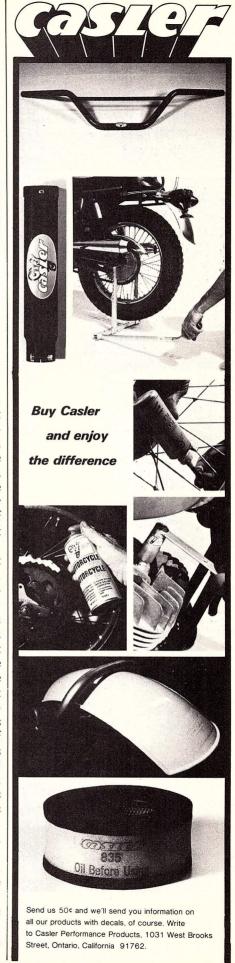
sanctions motocross, road racing, class "A" speedway, TT scrambles, flattrack, indoor and outdoor short track, mile and hillclimbing activities. On a given day in California alone 1400-1600 riders may be racing CMC events. While the AMA is larger, it cannot outshine the CMC in organization of events or operating economics. In time of recession, CMC, Inc. is booming just the same.

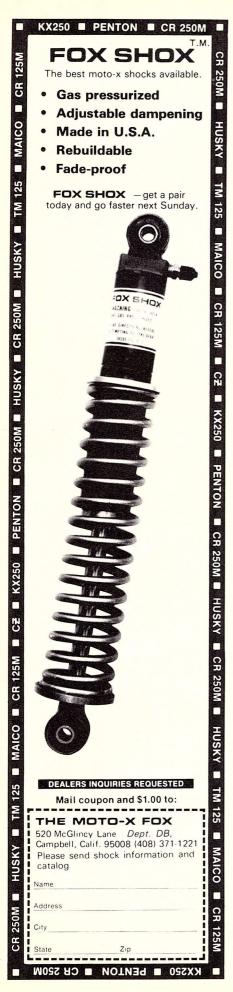
Talking to Stu Peters offers insight into both the success of the CMC, and the institution of race promoting.

"Working 24 hours a day, seven days a week, you can put together a good program, and keep it put together. The keys are an insurance program and versatility. We're working on insurance programs that will help tracks, parks, clubs, promoters to stay alive by keeping costs down. By running the number of events we do, we can keep the rates low. In the last four years the CMC has had an insurance program with medical insurance for the riders that's gotten cheaper as the years have gone by.

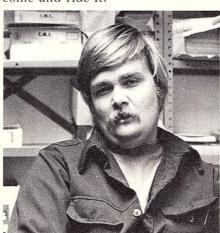
"A lot of people put together a program and feel it is bulletproof, the only one in town that is worth the while. You have to stay flexible from year to year, change programs, change formats, keep up to date with the racing world.

"A combination of good facilities that can handle the people, good





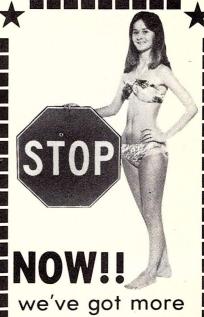
concessions and good clean rest rooms really pays off. It's not just having a good racetrack, but having a well-rounded racing facility. The CMC has worked on going to the bigger tracks, the well-known tracks, because we can have the participation of riders, the participation of spectators, and the name of the facility gets in the limelight in a lot of ink from local newspapers. Hopefully, people see that and come and see the races, and riders want to come and ride it.



"We've geared our nighttime events strictly for the spectators, getting done by 10:30 p.m. If a person goes to the movie theater on Friday night they can walk in the door at 7:30 p.m. and be out of there at 10:30 p.m., having seen their \$3 worth of film. That's what you're competing against. Some promoters go with the idea of giving the riders whatever they want, long motos, long practice, even if it lasts until 2 a.m. Such programs might get 400 spectators through the front gate on a good night, where a good night for us is 2500 spectators. Our opening night race of 1975 gave us about 2500 spectators and we had to shut entries at six o'clock. We take the first 250 entries or stop at 6:30, whichever comes first. We don't feel like prostituting the program by taking everyone who comes through the front gate and then running until 12 o'clock or one o'clock in the morning because of so many entries.

"You run into a lot of very unrealistic people. Ask the average person how many spectators are at an event, and in most cases they will glance around and say there must be thousands. They look around and see a lot of people and feel the promoters are making a bundle of money. There are given days that

Continued on page 99



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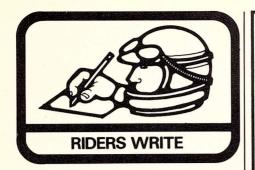


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WHEELS OF (SOME) MEN

Dirt bike riding is an experience to be respected and enjoyed in and for itself. Some are able to do it in splendor while others consider themselves lucky to participate at all. To display a beautiful glossy of a group in the splendor class degrading a fellow rider who is doing what he loves with what he has is rock bottom. I mean the Wheels of Man ad on the inside back cover of the January issue.

What crap. Les Roisum Delmar, Delaware

I saw something on the inside back cover of your magazine that turned my stomach. Wheels of Man should be ashamed.

Ellery Stowell Belton, Texas

I hope that the so-called hick wipes those guys off the track.

Barry Clayton Asheville, North Carolina

What the advertisers want to say is up to them, but we want to go on record as saying we don't care much for the philosophy either. As a matter of fact, their World War MX ad is disturbing too.

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Boy, are you guys lucky; I'm giving you the greatest invention since the disposable diaper. I call it the Jofa Delight. Sounds good, eh? They come in four yummy flavors, including Maico Orange. Just think of all the possibilities. After the race, take your woofie out and split a Jofa Delight. Or if you get the munchies in the middle of a race, pop a Jofa.

Now this is where you guys come in. All you have to do is produce it, advertise it, and sell it. Then we split the profits 50/50. 60/40? 70/30? 80/20?

> Bill Huff Cheyenne, Wyoming

Tamther BLACK SHADOW 175



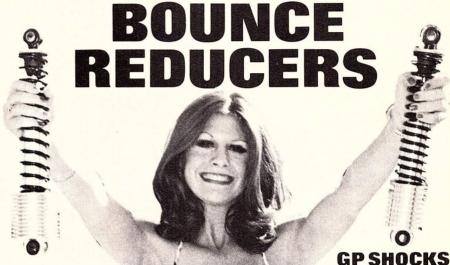
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Don free Ride Guide, write to:

Don free Ride Guide, write to:

Dealers: For free Ride Guide, write to: Red Wing Group-MAC, 42nd Floor 200 Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017 In Canada: P.O. Box 906, Sarnia, Ont. Come on, Huff; it's letters like this that make people think we make up everything in "Riders Write."

RONDO STRIKES AGAIN

I thought I saw "From the Saddle" in an inferior publication. What gives?

Ron Shanko Tidewater, Maryland

It may have been. But it was all a mistake and they promised never to do it again.

MARTY RIDES AGAIN

What is going on here? First Marty Tripes was with Yamaha, then Honda, Rickman, Husqvarna, and Can-Am. What next, Moto Guzzi?

> Ken White Arcadia, California

Marty has a contract with Wheels of Man and when he signed with Can-Am, they said, "No problem." Suddenly there was one after the season ended. So Marty split. He's looking around for other rides, but he'll be more careful. He should. He's Number Two in the 250 class and already has that Wheels of Man contract, so he's not sweating it.

THE RAIN IN MAINE FALLS AS SNOW

While fighting off several hunger-crazed polar bears on my 30-mile trip home from the trading post (they sell DB too), I happened to stumble across that letter from the Motocrossing Maniacs in Watuville, Maine. There were a lot of letters about converting a 900 BMW. Being a long-time motocross freak, I have pondered this question and this summer I came to some conclusions. I happen to have one of the fastest 750 BMW GP MXs around, right down to its titanium turn signals and aluminum alloy horn button.

The BM is a good bike to start with because it already has many trick items like an eight-inch travel front end, forward mounted shocks (new ones only), ridgeless alloy rims, maintenance-free final drive, and a five-gallon gas tank for those long motos.

Now to answer his questions: Yes, a trials tire helps the rear; no, highway pegs weigh too much, use the cylinders; no, sissy bars look

Continued on page 18

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IEW PRODUCTS

So you've been ordering stuff out of New Products - or just writing for info — and you haven't been mentioning DIRT BIKE. Do you realize how that makes us feel? Like homemade you-know-what. How do you expect all those companies to even know we exist? To know that only DB has a loyal readership? That we're in tune with what's happening? Oh never mind. But you better mention that you saw it here or we'll have Pete Dill draw you through Lake Erie with his Aquavarna.

TWO-POUNDER WITH CHEESE

Tired of slipping the clutch on your 250 Elsinore? Wanna go where the torquier 250s go? Adding the MT250 magneto tames the pipe and puts the power to the ground but . . . the heavy flywheel holds the bike back on top end for motocross or desert running.

Solution? Visit your local Mc-Donald's and ask for the Two Pounder with Cheese. Maybe a coke to go. Result? Uncomprehending stares. They won't know what you're talking about. It's a two-pound flywheel weight for the 250 Elsinores. Screws right into the stock



rotor and is locked on with a flathead Allen. Twenty five dollars for guaranteed satisfaction.

Why the cheese? Because it's gold. Ask at your local Honda dealer or write Al Baker Racing and Development, 15174 Raymer Street, Van Nuys, California 91405; (213) 997-7055. Don't forget the French fries. | new ported barrel, piston, custom

47 SABER-TOOTHED TIGERS ...

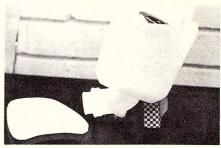
... Couldn't match the stumppulling power you'll get when you slap this set of teeth on. Climb cliffs, boulders, ledges and trees. Simple bolt-on installation. Special wrench is included at no additional cost. Think of it. Five ideal gears to handle any obstacle. As an option,



you can order a personalized model with your name, your cat's name, or whatever engraved right on the side. Not just a fad, but a sensation. Be the first on your block ... Serious inquiries to Ludwig, P.O. Box 5287. Caam, Mayaguez, P.R. 00708.

FILTERED BREATHER HOLES

Originally a Czech design, this rotationally molded, polyethylenealloy-type copy can be easily adapted



to most any scoot. Fairly lightweight and seemingly indestructible. Cutting off the horn in two other places will give you one of three available diameters for your particular carb. Top can also be trimmed to get that custom fit. A threaded rod passes completely through the filter and the bottom of the box itself. Comes complete with special Uni filter, hoses and clamps for \$28. C.H. Industries, 7550 Balboa Blvd., Van Nuvs, California; (213) 787-6298.

McDOUGAL'S 125 CR KIT



According to Bruce himself, this is an exact replica of the barrel, piston, carb and pipe that rocketed him to second in the 125 National Championship. This combined effort of McDougal, his tuner Gary Blandin, and Darryl Bassani gives you everything but steel balls. Kit includes:

Bassani hand-built pipe, a pre-jetted carb, and tips on a better handling CR by Bruce himself. Not to mention info on assembly and maintenance. \$270 complete, barrel and piston exchange. Contact Mc-Dougal Enterprises, 525 No. El Camino Real, San Clemente, California 92672; (714) 492-2270.

These are trick. How about double-lamination? A color printed center sheet between two layers of clear mylar; .030-inch thick and only 40 grams. Not only are they brighter and slicker than your average plate, but they're reversible. That's right. Yellow plates are, of all colors, red on the opposite side. White ones are green also, depending on which side you wish to use. So you can race with all the different organizations, with all the different numbers, using only two sets of plates. Wednesday and Friday nights, Saturday and Sunday. All on the same 125 Honda, and all in different classes. Flexible, tough, resilient and practically indestructible. But, maybe the best part (and it's tough to beat those bright colors), is that each and every plate

comes adorned with the authentic Krause Kompetition Kreature. It too is permanently encased (doublelaminated) between the mylar. Paws of a grizzly, head of a lion, chest of a



human, tail of a cobra, and the eyes of an eagle. Christened the Krause Kompetition Kreature by C. Heyberger himself. While they last, only \$3.99 per set of three including ties. Krause Competition Cycle, 231 East North Ave., Northlake, Illinois 60164; (312) 344-2233.

MORE DIRT AND STONE PROTECTION

This time for your teeth. This is the one developed with the cooperation of Heikki Mikkola by the KOHO people of Finland. Strange tribe of natives, the KOHOS. Their huts are woven entirely out of the root systems of the rare Numara bush. When completed, they're lowered into pits and are covered by earth. They are entered by use of a secret tunnel. The location of the entrance is passed on from generation



to generation. Still more fascinating is the fact that the KOHO have no teeth at all.

Comes complete with three deluxe diamond-shaped breather holes. If you can bend it all around like they say you can, it's the right kind of plastic for bouncing along the ground, too. Available only in the distinctive bright red, white and blue Mikkola colors. At better dealers or send for the '75 JT Racing catalog of trick stuff: 241 West 35th St., Suite A, National City, California 92050; (714) 479-9696.

SUSPENDERS

Low-bucks budget? Big-bucks dreams? Or at least the luxury of long travel rear suspension. How



about six inches of travel without having to modify your frame, relocate your air box, gusset your swingarm, move your shock mounts? Just bolt 'em on. Suspenders are priced under \$100 and come in three sizes: 13.5-inch shocks with four-inch travel, 14.5-inch shocks with five inches of travel and 15.5-inch shocks with six-inch travel. Jim Connolly's been racing with the prototypes for six months. That's his number one plated Pursang with a pair of the blue springed babies. For more info write Works Performance Products, 20970 Knapp Street, Chatsworth, California 91311; (213) 998-1977. Dealer inquiries invited.

MIKKOLA "UNLEATHERS" UNLEASHED

"Just like Heikki's." Cool and breezy. Looks like these will soon be the rage. A durable combination of nylon and goat hides. Just snap out the shin, knee and hip padding and throw'em into the washing machine. Goatskin is strategically placed in the crotch and inner knee to maintain



traction between you and your honey. All that and water repellent too. Available in Mikkola's own red, white and blue; Team Yamaha white, yellow and black; Team Husky blue with yellow stripe; and Team Maico red, black and yellow.

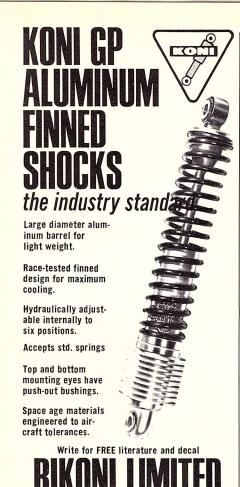
KOHO pants are imported in the U.S. and Canada by JT Racing Imports, 241 West 35th Street, Suite A, National City, California 92050; (714) 479-9696.

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Looking for that "Trick Factory Look"? You need look no further than Orange, California. Even more important, they'll protect your seals from mud, dirt, dust, mung and drool while providing a rubber bumper for flying rocks, stones and debris. Dings in your forks just wear out your seals faster. Who enjoys replacing seals? If you can find



anyone who says they do, let them do yours. Made of high-quality, super-thick rubber. Just the ding protection alone is worth the cost. They're \$7.95 per pair from D & G Performance Specialties, 1230 West Collins, Orange, California 92666; (714) 639-7020. One more place to use Armor All. Don't forget to ask for their catalog of everything hot you could imagine.



WRITE Continued from page 15

unclassy on a BM — try seat belts; and finally, I'd suggest you put the shocks in the stiffest position for your hefty carcass.

All this information doesn't come cheap, so you can send me a cheque or money order for a measly \$50 (Canadian).

M. Lyness Kamloops, B.C. Canada

OFF, WHIP, PUREE, GRATE, CHOP, MIX, BLEND, AND LIQUID FLIES

In regard to that letter from Milkshake Mike: I saw him in a race at a local drive-through. Talk about squids. First off, how does he expect to win with only one speed? I've got 17 speeds on my Sunbeam Super Muncher with super-wide ratios. And that DT-1 tach! Ya gotta use a QA-50 ammeter to even make it to the gate.

But the real grabber is the 10:1 mix of ice cream and milk. I don't see how he gets out of the kitchen. I'm running a 1:1 mix of Jose Crevo Gold and crushed ice. With that

Continued on page 20





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Super Digger 901 is a new knobby tire from YOKOHAMA, one of the world leading MX-tire manufacturers.

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On the pavement or on the dirt, get longer chain life and a cooler running chain with new BG TRACK 'N TRAIL CHAIN LUBE. Sprays on wet, penetrates into pins and bushings, then becomes a semi-dry lubricating film which

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BG PRODUCTS, INC.

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Better Guardians for Motor Maintenance

WRITE Continued from page 18

kind of mix, 30-minute motos are a bitch.

I can also stir, beat, crumb and mince all at a push of a button on my dashboard. I'm using a rebuildable stainless steel body with cooling fins. And I have a threemonth or 300 million revs guarantee.

And your GYDB16-SO is as slow as my mom's two-hour popcorn popper. I'll race you anytime at the Carlsbad snack bar.

T.M. Blender Manhattan Beach, California

Why does it take so long to put together a magazine? The articles we read in DIRT BIKE are two or three months old. I mailed this letter on January 12; let's see how long it takes for it to be printed.

Jimmy Hayes Norcross, Georgia

And we read your letter on February 2, typed it up, and sent it in with the rest of "Riders Write." Then a production editor reads it, corrects the staff's typing, and sends it to typesetting. Eventually, the girls there type it out on their machines and send the columns to the art department. Our art director pastes everything down on flat boards, two pages to a board, and all the boards get shipped to the printer in Illinois. They slap everything on the presses, peel off the magazine pages, cut and fold and staple all that, and then load all the copies on boxcars. From there it goes to the distributor whose trucks drop everything off at your newsstand. You complain about the time. We're amazed that it happens at all.

PROTECT YOUR BIKE

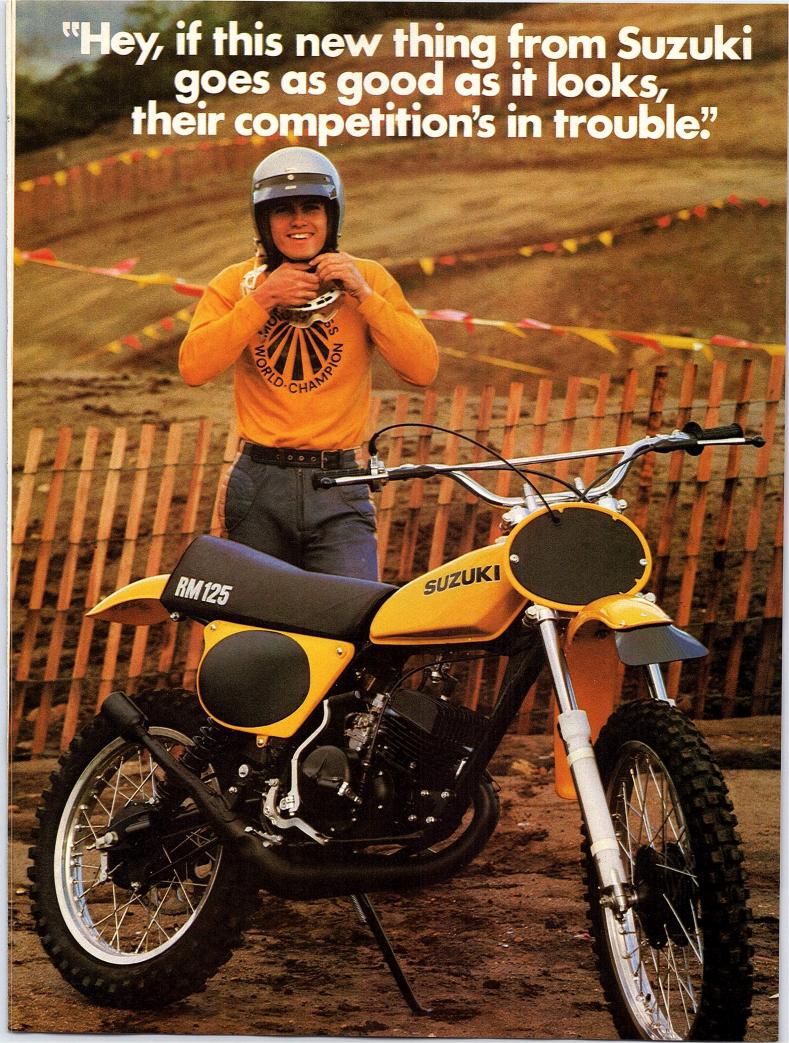
from rain, snow and theft. Let me show you how to build a pickup topper that will hold three bikes and all your gear. My "do it yourself" kit includes: blueprints, list of needed materials, specified sizes and step-by-step instructions.

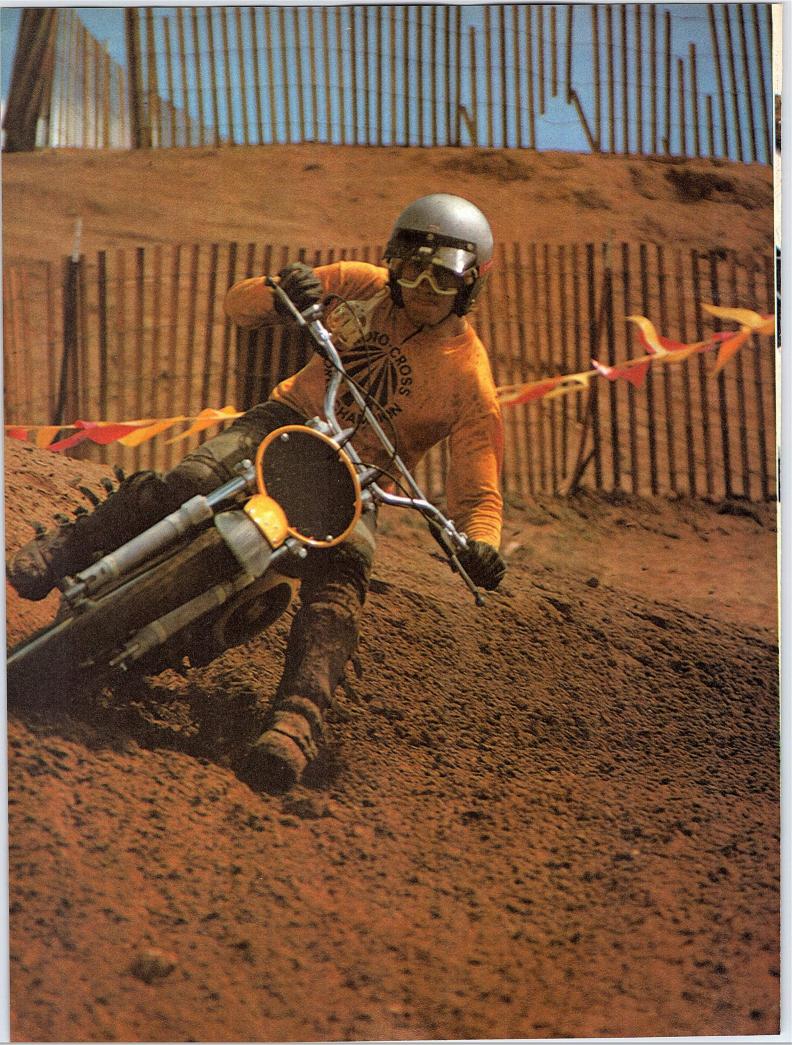
Send \$10 to: RANDY'S TOPPERS

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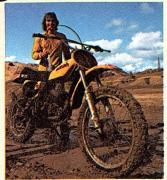


CHAIN LUBE





"Their competition is in big trouble."



"Well, to begin with, just the looks of the thing are enough to scare the squids right off the course.

"The seat's chopped off. The rear fender's a mile up in the air. And the shocks are gas-filled, laid-down, and so far forward they're almost out of sight.

"What it feels like is a spring, all wound up tight, ready to explode if you so much as jiggle it.

"So I jiggled it.

"WAAAAAAAAAEEEEEEEE!

"Oh sure, Suzuki told me that their new porting would give it a lot of snap. But this was ridiculous. We came out of the hole so fast, I just barely hung on.

"And then we hit the whoops.

"At least, they looked like whoops. The only thing was, the wheels didn't seem to know it. They clung to the little ones like a snake going over rocks. No matter how high the frame went, the wheels hung right in there, spitting out power.

"And over the big ones, they didn't fishtail once. We went through those whoops on a line so straight you could hang clothes on it.

"Man, that's handling!

"Up came the first turn. A big hairy sweeper with a super-high berm.

"I tapped the gears, and slammed into it hard, Magic. Right away, it seemed to seek out and lock into the right line all by itself.

"Coming out, I cranked it on, and WAAAAAEEEEEE, again. We shot out of that thing like a sling shot, heading for the first jump.

"Surprise.

"We didn't stay in the air nearly as long as I thought we would,

seeing how fast we were going.

"And all day long, I found the same thing. The wheels on the RM like to stay in the dirt where they can push... not in the air where they

can spin.

"So if you're after a bike for show, this isn't it. This one's for win.

"And my lap time proved it.

"What's its secret?

"Handling. It handles like a dream. You don't have to fight it or muscle it or make corrections all the time for goofs.

"You just flow over that course like syrup flows over pancakes.

"Competition, you're in big trouble."

"The transfer ports are so big, they put two bridges in em."



"This is one bike you won't have to port. Suzuki's already done it for you. In fact, they're so big, they're bridged — twice — so the rings won't get hung up. That means you've got 6 holes sucking up the gas/air mixture out of the crankcase into the combustion chamber. This new porting — plus a big, 28mm carb — gives the RM its snap and power."

SUZUKI'S RM-125 IS HERE.

U.S. Suzuki Motor Corporation, Dept. 8004, Santa Fe Springs, Calif. 90670



Ride safely: wear a helmet, eye protection and appropriate riding apparel.



ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH

Surefooted Sherpa Sibling

Staff of DIRT BIKE

We're here on the sunny slopes outside of Barcelona, Spain, watching a world-famous goatherd bring home the goats. The Spanish Alps are noted for their ruggedness. Those who would traverse the slopes require the skill of a veteran mountaineer, the surefootedness of a mountain goat and the torque of a water buffalo. Let's see if he has a few minutes for an interview.

"Oh, sir. Do you have a few minutes?"

"Si."

"You are the world-famous Alpine goatherd, aren't you?" "Si."

"I couldn't help but notice that, breaking from tradition, you are herding your goats on a motorcycle.

"Si."

"It's a Bultaco Alpina, isn't it?" "So?"

"Is it a good motorcycle for herding goats in the Alps?"

"Si.

"Say, can you tell us your name?

"Cy.

"Cy?" "Si."

"That doesn't sound very Spanish."

"Sigh"

"Do you mean sigh as a sigh of relief or . . . '

"So, Cy, what can you tell us about the Alpina?"

"Say?"

"Si.

"Bon."



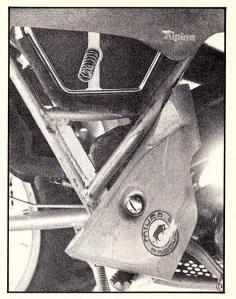
Once underway the feeling of crowdedness disappears.





George demonstrates your basic turning wheelie.





Senor Bulto thought of it first. You know, A before I except for I before A when being Ceen on sections. The old trailizing the trialer gambit. The Alpina is a trailized Sherpa T trialer. Each year it gets a little bit more A before I'd. The Alp does just fine in enduro competition. Back east in New England where 3000 or so A riders take their mud-slogging clockwatching quite seriously, Alpinas ridden by Ed Avery (1972) and Bob Fielding (1973 and 1974) have taken the number one plate. Bob moved up to the 350 for 1974.

Wonderin' what's new with the '75 model? How about a review of the '74 changes? That's when they changed the Sherpa trials frame a bit to better suit it for trails. They moved the powerplant rearward ¾-inch and lowered it a bit. Pursang triple clamps were added to provide more trail for the trail. The same head angle was retained. This keeps the turning trial-like.

For 1975 they went to chrome moly for the frame and swingarm. The swingarm was lengthened one inch behind the bottom shock mount. They added a head steady. The stop light switch was moved up and out of the way.

A big change was shifting the shifting from the right side to the left side. As with the other Buls, diehard right-footers can switch things back if they want to. The shaft is splined to take the shift lever on the right side. Then just flop over the rear wheel, bolt the sprocket on the brake side and weld a tab on the swingarm for the brake anchor.

This year's Alpina picked up some additional ground clearance because of the shifting change. The factory







JUNE 1975

was able to reshape the cases. A longish out-of-the-way Dural alloy shift lever takes care of gear changes.

As with the Sherpas, there's a chain oil reservoir built into the swingarm. Other trials-type things like the plastic chain guard and the chain tensioner can be found. Pegs are sturdy serrated loops, spring loaded and folding.

Betor suspension, aft and stern. It's set up on the soft side. Trials heritage. Flat-out hauling produces a spongy bottoming through whoops



and jumps, but a spongy swoosh is far better than a jarring clang.

It is possible to increase the down damping on the shocks for harder riding. You have to pull off the shocks and remove the damping assembly, but it isn't necessary to drain the oil. Bultaco suggests trying one-eighth turns with the valving during the dialing-in operation.

The Alpina has the same rear wheel as the Pursang and the same conical front hub as the Matador. Rims are shoulderless Akronts. Knobby treads replace the traditional trials pattern of the Sherpa.

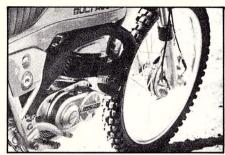
The 350 Alpina puts out two less horsepower than a 125 Elsinore. We got 18 horses on the pump. A 27mm Amal mixes. The bike isn't as sluggardly as one might expect for a zooted-up trialer. One of 'em finished ninth in the 350 Expert at Hopetown last year. Mike Hannon must have ridden his bejeebers off.

The Alpina borrows its transmission from the Matador and the tranny ratios jump from a 3.48 first to a 2.26 second to a 1.60 third, 1.13 fourth and a 1.00 fifth. The wide gaps are not the slightest problem because of the power characteristics. Put simply, the power characteristics are low-down, stump-pulling, fieldplowin', etc. John Deere is thinking about bolting two Alpinas together to make an economy four-wheeled tractor. If you want you can pretend you're on a Rokon and just ride around in third all day long.

You'll probably notice the silencer

right off. It has been dubbed a pregnant boomerang. There's enough room in there for a tool kit, owner's manual and a change of underwear. Lurking about inside the black box is a spark arrestor which is pending approval with the U.S.D.A., those wonderful folks who determine whether or not you're a fire hazard on public land. One more thing about the silencer. It works.

The Alpina is wired to accept a battery in a compartment under the



seat. Otherwise the space can be utilized as a spare tool compartment. Bultaco also provides a tool belt with the bike that the trials guys wear to carry their screwdrivers.

Not having a swamp handy, we loaded the Alp up and headed out to California City for a 140-mile ride over enduro trails. It was in its natural element picking along the narrow trails, running through gullies and handling tight turns. And the hills. Just leave it in third and chug straight up while those about vou are getting sideways, downshifting, digging great first-gear ditches and otherwise falling all over themselves. Sometimes it was necessary to shift down to second. So it

The soft suspension is nice for messing around on trials-type terrain. Jim Connolly really went out of his gourd one day at Valley Cycle Park, bomping along at three mph havin' himself a ball. Started mumbling about getting one to stay in shape for motocross.

If you've ridden one of the older Alpinas on the pavement you know how you don't want to push it much past 45 or 50. The Sherpa chassis geometry just wasn't that stable at speed. The changes in the frame, triple clamps and swingarm have improved things a lot. Flat-out at about 60 to 65 on the pavement the bike seemed stable enough. At speed through a sand wash it would shake its head some, reminding you of its 52-inch wheelbase.

BULTACO 350 ALPINA PRICE: (retail, approx.) \$1395 ENGINE TYPE: Two-stroke, single-cylinder DISPLACEMENT: 348cc BORE & STROKE: 83.2mm x 64mm **COMPRESSION RATIO: 9.5:1** CARBURETION: 27mm Amal HP@RPM: N/A CLUTCH: Wet, multi-plate PRIMARY DRIVE: 2.38:1 (38/16) chain TRANSMISSION RATIOS: 1) 3.48:1 2) 2.26:1 3) 1.60:1 4) 1.13:1 5) 1.00:1 FINAL DRIVE: 5/8" Joresa chain 13-tooth countershaft 42-tooth rear sprocket AIR FILTRATION: Twin Air oiled foam **ELECTRICAL SYSTEM:** Femsa flywheel magneto LUBRICATION: Bel Ray 50:1 RECOMMENDED FUEL: Premium RECOMMENDED OIL: Bel Ray FUEL CAPACITY: 10.5 liters (2.9 gallons)

FRAME: Chrome moly SUSPENSION:

16.5cm travel (6.5 inches) 10.0cm travel (3 15/16 inches); measured at the rear axle WHEELS & SPOKES: Akront TIRES:

3.00x21 4.00x18 **DIMENSIONS:**

Wheelbase: 134.1cm (52.3 inches) Clearance: 28.2cm (11 inches) Seat Height: 85.9cm (33.5 inches) Handlebar Width: 87.2cm (34 inches) Weight: 225 pounds) weighed with oil and one gallon of gas 45.3% on front wheel 54.7% on rear wheel

BRAKES:

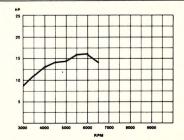
cable-operated, front (140x35mm) rod-operated, rear (140x40mm) INSTRUMENTS: Speedometer/

odometer LIGHTS: Head and tail SILENCER: Yes, works good SPARK ARRESTOR: Yes, approval pending PRIMARY KICK: No

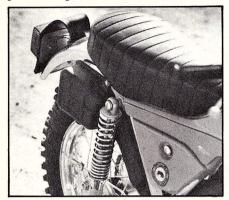
WARRANTY: 60 days, parts and labor, unconditional

PARTS PRICES: Piston Assembly \$36.53 (incl. rings, pins, circlip)

Rings (each) 4.98 Clutch Cable 5.00 Shift Lever N/A



The brakes are set up for trailing. The front brake bears most of the load for serious slowdowns. The rear brake, like those on trials bikes, is more of a slower than a stopper. This means that on those gnarly, steep downhills even a heavy foot has to try hard to succeed at sending the rear end sliding out sideways. For anything other than a serious panic stop, the brakes seem well



Pregnant boomerang spark arrestor/ silencer and taillight before it came unalued.

suited for the Alpina's intended usage.

Starting, as opposed to stopping, is classic Bul. Tickle the Amal till it spills petrol all over the cold engine, position the left-side starter by pulling in the clutch lever, and give it a good whap with the right leg while standing beside the bike or with the left leg while astride the machine. It starts most of the time with that first whap. We didn't have any plug problems.

If you're worried about a trials bike being uncomfortable for riding while seated — you're right. But the Alpina is a trail bike. Relocation of the footpegs, different bars and a decent saddle make the Alpina a sitdowner's special.

BITS & PIECES

Speedo and headlight are both rubber mounted. In theory a fine thought, but the speedo bounces all over, making it hard to read.

Front fender is aluminum, rear is chromed steel.

Cables are nylon lined.

Cylinder has lots of little rubber doohickies to deaden noise.

Bash plate is drilled to provide drainage but does not offer protection for cases. Miura Products offer an accessory item that does protect the cases.

Remove one bolt on right side to get to Twin Air filter.

rubber dust covers.

Kill button is mounted on left

Taillight is mounted on large hunk of folded-over rubber. L.A. smog must have gotten ours, because the rubber tore in two, creating another use for gray tape.

Front fender comes with mud flap.

Spacers added to fork springs help for faster trail riding.

Gas cap is vented with rubber receiver to stick line in.

Brake pedal is serrated. Boot

Hand levers and throttle have won't slip off unless you really work

SUMMATION

Bultaco has done a better job than anybody else to date of trailizing a trials bike for foofing, serious mountain goat tactics or enduro running. The bike has proved itself in competition. What you get is a machine that can do anything in the dirt well except go seriously fast. It's light, maneuverable, climbs buildings in a single bound, lugs down to about 34 rpm and can plow the back 40 in between the fire drills.

INTER-AM THE ONLY SOLID ALUMINUM **HANDLEBARS APPROVED** FOR COMPETITION BY A.M.A.*

After 1½ years of research and development, 2 years of use by thousands of riders, and 1 year of consideration by the A.M.A.; Inter-Am's solid aluminum bars have been approved by the A.M.A. for all types of competition.

A.M.A.

"Let me constant"

A.M.A.

"Let me congratulate you on being the first manufacturer to have handle bars other than steel approved for competition. From all indications your handlebars should assist our riders in their chosen profession."

Note also that at the present time, Inter-Am's aluminum handlebars are the first and only aluminum handlebars approved by the A.M.A. for competition.

Why have thousands of riders switched to Inter-Am handlebars? Basson #I is that a Independent Martl.

handlebars? Reason #1 is that an Independent Metal-

*As of January 1975

urgical Lab states that our aluminum handlebars are approximately 40% stronger than conventional chromemoly handlebars.

Dirt Bike Magazine

Dirt Bike Magazine
"Everyone says bars are a matter of preference, but
we never did find anyone who preferred the stock ones.
They were promptly replaced with Inter-Am bars,
solid aluminum and reportedly unbendable. They
haven't bent yet."
Reason #2 is that although harder to bend permanently out of shape, the aluminum will flex more for a
given shock. This absorbs much of the impact transmitted to the rider. The Lab test indicates this should
be true and many top Moto-X, Desert and Enduro riders confirm this fact!

next time you bend your bars, try ours!

It's not INTER-AM if it doesn't have this decal.





BIKE SUPPLIES, INC. DB675

751 Monroe Way . Placentia, Ca. 92670 714 / 993-2603



"For high-speed, Baja-type riding, Eagle D/S II is the only way to go." Rolf Tibblin has been there.

Rolf Tibblin, three-time World Champion and an old hand at Baja-type racing, knows the desert is no place to guess about your tires.

That's why he was part of a Husqvarna team that worked closely in the field with Goodyear engineers to develop the Eagle D/S II—a desert tire built just for the kind of punishment this terrain can dish out.

The D/S II has a special computerized tread pattern and tough buttressed lugs for positive traction. And rugged 6-ply construction to soak up the jars and slams of flat-out running.

The Goodyear Eagle D/S II is the tire that took the Baja 1000 first time out. Rolf calls it—"The only tire I'd use or recommend for high-speed, off-road riding."

Don't you settle for anything less. Eagle A/T for street. Eagle D/T for dirt track. Eagle MX for motocross. Eagle D/S for desert. Eagle R/T for on-/off-road.



Eagle D/T, Eagle A/T, Eagle MX, Eagle D/S II, Eagle D/S, Eagle R/T -TM's The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company, Akron, Ohio



LIGHT, RIGHT AND BLUE

OSSA 175MX

by the Staff of DIRT BIKE



As you grow older you begin to appreciate total packages. Observe the 15-year-old kid who brags as he watches the girls go by, "Yeah, I'm a leg man myself."

Kid stuff. You have to appreciate the parts as they fit into the whole.

Same way with motorcycles. Only the uninitiated will buy a bike just because it does great wheelies. "Well, how does it come out of the corners?" "Who cares, it wheelies like crazy."

Kid stuff.

So we'll come right out and say it up front: The Ossa 175 is a total package. It's got power, it handles, it's purty, it's polished in the details and, very important, it's got soul. Regrettably, everything has a flaw here and there, and the Ossa is no exception.

Now don't get us wrong, it took a long time to come to that conclusion. Love at first sight is also kid stuff. But we didn't come to the bike without an opinion. We've ridden

Phantom Performance Package

the 250 Phantom and the 250 desert model. We knew pretty much what to expect.

Down at the track we did the usual. Take a few pictures. One guy adjusts the brakes so it takes the lightest touch to lock them up. The next guy comes along and plays with them till the pedal is dragging on the ground and the wheel is still turning. Nothing out of the ordinary. One



guy goes 30 laps on the motocross course and the next plays in the backsection and in the sand. But that's where we drew the line. This is a motocross bike and that's where it has to be tested.

So we rode that day. And we rode the next week. And the next. And the next. Then a funny thing happened: it disappeared. Someone liked that bike so much he took it. Now, things like this happen occasionally, it's only natural, being bike freaks and all. But we, of course, had to find out who took it. Factories tend to get upset when we tell them one of the riders is keeping a secret.

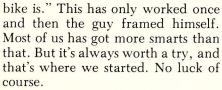
We took the usual first step. We all gathered in the office and took our seats. Chet leads, as he is beyond suspicion (unless the bike doesn't turn up, then we naturally assume he has it). "OK, we're going to turn out the lights and when we turn them back on we want a slip of paper on the table telling where the



Gunnar shows how to come out of a corner. If only it were that easy.







Everyone knew what was coming next. An order out for something to loosen the tongues. Liquid truth serum. With a long night ahead of us, we began the trial. We would all give our opinions about the bike. We would disagree, we would fight, we would stick up for what we liked about the bike, we would shout wildly, become oblivious to the fact that we were out to catch a thief, and the person who shouted the loudest, jumped the highest and strangled the most people was the thief. He obviously liked the bike the most. An infallible method. We

began.

'Levers are good. And the bars are just the right bend. But those mud guards on the levers are really bad, totally useless." No one disagreed, as they didn't want to commit themselves. Not enough truth serum had been consumed vet. "It had the usual 3.00x21 and 4.00x18 setup, nothing wrong with that, and the Pirellis are OK for everything but hard-pack.'

"I've always liked Betors and the Ossa's really made it handle. If you're going to race it seriously I suppose better rear shocks would be in order, but the stock ones aren't bad. Forks are outstanding."

We had a problem. Everyone was praising the bike. We needed a fanatic.



Here's where it all begins. Smooth and fast.

sieve. Five laps and my goggles were drenched." "Ah, that doesn't matter, just clog up the vents with a sheetmetal screw and they won't leak. Of course they won't breathe, either. I'd just as soon go with a little mess.

Good. Good. A pattern was forming. You have to catch them when they go bananas over details.

"How bout that suspension in the really rough stuff. It kept that bike going exactly where you wanted." No dissenting opinion. "And did it ever slide!" General cheers. "I felt like a flattracker around some of those corners." A toast to the Ossa's sliding ability. Everyone was loosening up and real opinions were coming out.

"I heard the Ossa's swingarms "But those fork caps leak like a were breaking. When we get ours



Ossa in its favorite position. Notice new trick setup on Jim's boot.

back we'll have to check and see if it's cracked." "Didn't you hear what Ossa said when they delivered the bike? They knew the swingarms were breaking so they're putting on new chrome moly ones as stock. They'll never break."

But the spell had been broken. George had mentioned getting ours back, and we all realized again why we were there. Talk about the details, don't commit yourself to the major parts. "Yeah, I sure like that blue fiberglass, but it probably cracks easier than plastic."

"Hey, did you guys notice it will only run with the petcocks in the R position?"

"That's nothin', did you check out how that kickstarter stuck out and bit your leg every time you slid forward?" "It didn't bother me. You just don't know how to ride. But that kickstarter pedal did hit the footpeg every time it was started. The footpeg finally cracked in half. Dumb. Really dumb."

"Talk about dumb. Did you check out those mounts for the expansion chamber? They broke off every time we rode."

"The hot setup there is to replace those rubber things with a straight bolt and use some inner tube washers."

"Who cares about that junk, how did you guys like that power? I loved it! It must top out around 75 and I could always keep it in the powerband. Just go for a gear and there was the horsepower, just waiting for you."

"Sure, the power was great, but it how."

didn't do me any good when I missed shifting second to third every time." Everyone agreed, yes, that was a problem, second to third was indeed something you couldn't ignore. Then Gunnar quietly began; it was the first he had spoken all evening. "That gearbox is perfect. Just like what ought to be on a championship MX bike. Never let off the gas, don't use the clutch, and it always slips right into gear. Smooth."

We were awed at his attitude. Who would be the first to admit we weren't championship MX riders, and no matter what he said or did we were still going to miss shifts. "But Gunnar, I tried shifting with and without the clutch, with and without the gas, and I still missed third." "Then you just don't know how."

"The braking. We haven't talked about the braking yet. Great, phenomenal, and I'll club anyone who says otherwise." No one disagreed for two reasons: it was true the brakes were great, and the other obvious one.

"Did anyone ever weigh it? It felt great."

"213 pounds with half a tank. But that won't do anybody any good if the bike doesn't run. And let me tell you, it won't run long if we leave that paper air cleaner on it. Trash. If that bike were sitting here right now I'd pull off that seat and rip the air cleaner off and stomp on it." Excellent. We were into our second case of refreshments and the truth was coming out.

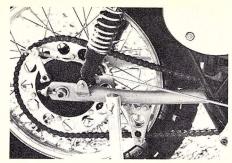
"I still can't get over the power! I was pulling a 250 up a sandwash ..."

"Hold it! Wait just a second! What 250? What sandwash? We've never had that bike in any sandwash." Don turned pale. He backed toward the door. Chet grabbed him.

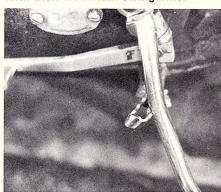
We weren't rough on him, though. It's understandable. "Just bring the bike back and everything is kosher."

We rode the bike one more time to see if all our impressions were accurate. They were. It's fast. It handles. It's a natural-born slider. Jim Connolly said that on a rough course he could ride it as fast as any 250. Gunnar still shifted it perfectly and the rest of us were still missing shifts. The fork caps still leaked. The new footpeg was already cracking but the pipe was holding on with the regular bolts in the mounts. A quick check of the air cleaner found it to be leaking slightly.

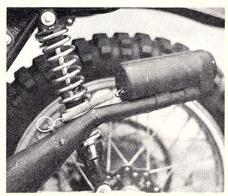
And everyone still loved it. It's got soul. Personality, if that word grabs you more. When you hop on the bike you can tell everything fits together. It feels good. That's what a total package is. Forks are matched to shocks are matched to frame is matched to pegs/seat/bars. It will wheelie, but it won't only wheelie. It will slide, but it won't only slide. What more can we say? If you're going to buy a 175, this is the one to buy. That is, if there is any chance at all of getting parts. In your neighborhood or even in the next neighborhood. In L.A. we drive 30 miles for our parts and it's worth it. But if it is to the next state for parts . . . well, it is good, but let's be reasonable. Now we just have to make sure the bike gets back to Ossa.



New stronger chrome moly swingarm won't break. They have had problems with their aluminum swingarms.



This has to be the reason the footpeg broke. Awkwardly placed kickstarter gets in the way when in use and when it's supposed to be tucked away.



Ugly silencer minus one spring. A stronger weld where the spring attaches might help. But then again it might not.



This was the third and last time the pipe mount broke. The rubber just seems to want to split in half. Replace it with a straight bolt.

OSSA 175 PHANTOM

PRICE: (retail, approx.) \$1495
ENGINE TYPE: Two-stroke single
DISPLACEMENT: 175cc
BORE & STROKE: 60mm x 60.9mm
COMPRESSION RATIO: N/A
CARBURETION: Amal 32mm
HP @ RPM: 20.8 @ 8500
CLUTCH: Wet
PRIMARY DRIVE: Gear

PRIMARY DRIVE: Gear TRANSMISSION RATIOS:

1) 2.60:1

2) 1.92:1

3) 1.43:1

4) 1.17:1 5) 1.00:1

FINAL DRIVE:

12-tooth countershaft
53-tooth rear sprocket
AIR FILTRATION: Paper
ELECTRICAL SYSTEM: Motoplat
LUBRICATION: Pre-mix
RECOMMENDED FUEL: Premium
RECOMMENDED OIL: Full Bore
FUEL CAPACITY: 9 liters (2.1 gallons)
FRAME: Chrome moly
SUSPENSION: Betor
WHEELS & SPOKES:

Akront shoulderless TIRES:

3.00x21 Pirelli 4.00x18 Knobby DIMENSIONS:

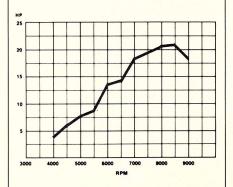
BRAKES:

Wheelbase: 139cm
Clearance: 17.8cm
Seat Height: 83.8cm
Handlebar Width: 34.5cm
Weight: 213 pounds, weighed with oil and one gallon of gas
96 pounds on front wheel
117 pounds on rear wheel

Cable-operated drum, front Rod-operated conical, rear INSTRUMENTS: None LIGHTS: None

SILENCER: Yes, ugly but quiet SPARK ARRESTOR: No PRIMARY KICK: No WARRANTY: No

PARTS PRICES:
Piston assembly \$11.40
Rings 10.50
Clutch cable 3.20
Clutch lever 9.90
Air cleaner 6.00



TIBBLIN GLOVES

by the Staff of DIRT BIKE

The first thing you're going to notice about the new Tibblin gloves is that they are very pretty. Slip on a brand-new pair and stand around awhile. Look Swedish. Mumble things like yumpin' yimminy. Maybe somebody will actually saunter up and say: Hey, are you really Rolf Tibblin?

The color scheme is black, white and orange. They'll make you feel like a factory rider for Harley-Davidson. Hope you like orange because that's what color your hands will be for about 24 hours after the first wearing. And the eighth wearing, too.

Actually, the first thing somebody is going to ask you is: Are those gloves really worth 30 dollars? \$28.85. Yep, that's a lot for a pair of gloves. Why, the next thing you know there'll be tax surcharges, the price of sugar will triple and gas will be going for 55 cents a gallon.

The distributor, JT Racing (241 W. 35th St., National City, California 92050) gives a three-month guarantee against material and workmanship failure. Ever had a pair of \$8.95 wonders that totally disintegrated within three months? Sure you have.

According to JT, Heikki Mikkola went through the entire '74 campaign with one pair of gloves. They didn't say if that included practice too. Anyway, if they hold up for frantic Finnish flying maneuvers they should endure for mere mortals. Additional name dropping includes Joel Robert and Guenady Moiseev.

The double padding seems to absorb a lot of the friction normally transferred to the hands. And if you're the type who's always chewing up the knuckle on your throttle thumb, you may be able to get away without taping your thumb anymore.

Let's listen to what one satisfied customer had to say. "I had really bad blisters on my hands from hanging onto those Yamaha grips all day Thursday. The next night I



"Why, with these I could ride a rhino"

could hardly hold a screwdriver to work on my bike, a CZ, the 20th century's most noble land-based creation. Truly a masterpiece of technological innovation, a fortress of durability, a superb specimen of . . . (Stick to the gloves, George.) . . . So I rode two 40-minute motos Saturday and I didn't have a problem. Why these gloves can actually help build up calluses. From now on, I won't wear anything else."

Three staffers have been race and trail testing the Tibblin gloves for a couple of months now and two out of three are really satisfied. Both said they would pay \$28 'cause they like 'em and because of the three-month guarantee. One pair of test gloves developed about an inch and a half tear along a seam after just four outings. JT replaced them with a new pair under the three-month guarantee. They'll do that for you too. Just remember to mail in the warranty card.

Now let's listen to what one dissatisfied customer had to say. "They hurt my hands the first time I wore them, and that was after I soaked 'em in water. They hurt my hands the second time I wore them.

across the fatty part of my hand where the calluses are supposed to be." Then he told us he wouldn't spend \$28 on them because he always seems to be losing his gloves anyway and he'd rather lose three-dollar specials.

Here's an endorsement from a fellow we run into from time to time known as the Boozer or Peter Rocket, something like that. Really likes his Tibblins. Told us he went out and rode one lap with his old gloves and had to come rushing back into the pits to get his hand stainer specials. Says: How can you lose with that three-month warranty?

Here's the hot setup for breaking them in. Toss 'em in a bucket of water just like Yogi Berra used to do with his catcher's mitt. Let 'em get good and wet. Then put them on while they're still wet and drive out to the track, desert, swamp, forest or wherever you gas it and they'll be all nice and dry and form fitting just like Lorelei's Levi's, only no VPL.

Anything else we ought to say about the gloves, guys? They help cure ingrown toenails. Thanks, George. Now go ride your rhino some more.

Canadian commuters make a beeline for a round of Northland Sunrises.

Dear DB:

Just a note to say that I'm hereby apologizing for all past snickers, guffaws, gross asides and snide remarks made during those afternoon sessions at Chuy's Bar and Grill when Chet used to try to impress us all with stories about eastern woods riding. As I remember it, the Bazzer or somebody would be telling about the time he broke both footpegs and his plastic goodie guard when he hit a pothole at the base of Banzai Hill, and Chet'd chime in with a story about some man-eating bottomless pit at the last Large Bush Enduro near some place like Intercourse, Pennsylvania.

Well, I apologize. It took moving to Canada to find it out, but I'll have to admit that motocross and desert racing aren't all there is to off-road

riding.

Bet you never thought you'd hear me blaspheme like that? Well, I've learned my lesson. You see, I got up here in late September, and by that time motocross had pretty much closed down for the season. It's hard to hold your line on a berm when the damn thing's coated with ice. So I'd been kind of sitting on my hands, riding a few street bikes and such and generally being pretty bored. Then along came something called the Frostbite Enduro. "Enduro," said I, "pshaw." That was my first mistake. "Guess I'll ride it," I added to myself. "After all, ain't much else happening until April." That was my second.

The Frostbite Enduro is put on by a bunch of guys who call themselves the Niagara Region Enduro Riders. Guess they got tired of six months of no competition and decided to do something about it. That makes sense. The reason they call it the "Frostbite" is that they run it in January. That also makes sense. Riding it does not necessarily make sense.

But I didn't realize that, and the fact that it's been an unusually mild winter in these parts helped suck me in. So I sent in my entry fee and started asking around about how to prepare the bike for that kind of event. I asked one guy if I should use studded tires. "Can't," he said, "it's

FORMER MXA EDITOR GETS BITTEN



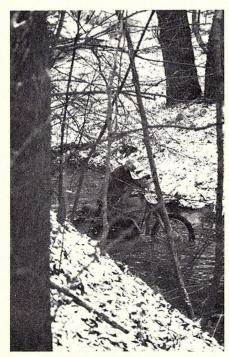
Just a note to say, wish you'd been here

CANADA'S FROSTBITE ENDURO

by MIKE KERLEY

Photos by John H





This guy finally found a place where the ground wasn't frozen.

illegal. Just wear lots of clothes." Asked another guy about water-proofing. "Don't bother," he said, "just wear lots of clothes." Asked another one about plugs. "Keep it running," he said, "and wear lots of clothes."

How many clothes can you pile on the human body, that's what I'd like to know.

Then I started looking around for someone to ride it with. Asked my buddy Dan. He's a sponsored motocrosser, so I figured he'd be game for a little fun in the woods.

"I'll be glad to *pit* for you," said Dan.

"Any particular reason you don't want to ride it?," I asked, starting to get nervous.

"Oh, no, 'course not," he said. "It's just that I don't have a bike, and I've got a date the night before and I, eh, I gotta fill out my income tax return. But I'll pit for you. I can fill out the form in the truck. Ah, you do have a

heater in the truck, don't you?" Told him I did. He left making a sound that reminded me of giggling, but it couldn't have been.

It was pretty warm all week, almost like spring, everyone said. Once the temperature got up to 37 degrees. Started thinking I'd best take two sets of clothes — one for the weather we were having, and one for if it turned nasty. But the morning of the Frostbite I took one look out the window and decided not to bother. It was snowing, mostly horizontally because the wind was blowing so hard, and even in my sleep-befuddled 5:30 a.m. state I figured out that it wasn't any 37 degrees. And might not be again. Ever. They say a new ice age is coming, you know.

The start was only about 60 miles away, but it took us two hours to get there because the freeway was reduced to a single lane. And that was under about two inches of snow.

I noticed that Dan had forgotten to bring his tax forms, but figured that he'd just slipped up in the rush to get going. Asked him how his date had gone, but he just laughed and told me what a kidder I was. I thought that was kind of strange, but was too busy avoiding the drifts that were trying to eat my truck to think about it much.

We finally got there, signed in and stood around waiting for the key time. That was still a half-hour off, but I noticed that most of the riders had started their bikes and were running them to keep the engines warm. So I did the same thing. Besides, a hot cylinder makes a pretty good hand-warmer. Ten minutes before my number was due to come up, I cut the engine off for a few minutes. And that's when all the trouble began.

Three minutes before my number I fired up again. The bike started right up, but the throttle was stuck wide open. Figured the slide might be a little icy, so I shut down, banged the carb a few times and tried again. Same thing. Decided the cable might be stretched too tight, so I did a quick rerouting job. Meanwhile, my number had come and gone and my goggles were starting to fog up. Got the cable back in place, but now the bike wouldn't start. Couple of guys gave me a push. No luck. Pulled the plug. It looked like the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean. Dropped in a fresh plug and the bike finally started - but I was ten minutes behind my number. Not to worry. It was going to be a long day, and a little motocross technique ought to eat up some of those minutes.

Another mistake, but it's too depressing to keep counting them.

The first couple of miles were pavement, but I spotted a cop car and some ice right off so I played it cool. Couldn't go very fast anyway, because the cross-wind was so strong that my knobby tires kept indicating a desire to be somewhere else — like the other side of the road facing oncoming traffic. But finally we got off the road and into the trees. Passed a couple of guys right there. They didn't care because they were running on time, but it made me feel good.

We were working our way down a



lane in the forest. Obviously, it had there's enough room. been ridden heavily when the ground was soft, probably by the guys marking out the course, but now all the ruts were frozen solid. and the wet places had turned into skating rinks. Walking that trail would have been difficult, but I figured if I just kept the front end light I could still make some time.

In retrospect, Chet, riding those trails was a lot like trying to tap-dance in a closet full of marbles, but I didn't really realize that. The adrenaline was pumping and I was trying to keep warm and just watching out for majors like fallen trees and ponds. There wasn't anyone else in sight, and I figured I had a lot of catching up to do. So I gassed it. About the time I was upshifting into fourth, my rear wheel hit an ice patch. When I tried to correct I dropped the front wheel onto another ice patch. In a different rut. I won't bore you with what happened next, because you've been there. But you'd be surprised how far you can slide on your head if

The bike started on about the fifth kick, which may or may not have been a blessing. Got started again, this time using both legs as outriggers. Worked fine until the trail started to narrow, then I almost lost a leg because my goggles were totally fogged and I hadn't really noticed.

Broke out of the bush and back onto a road. After about a mile, I finally had to pull off the goggles. My nose had been running, but after a little while the left nostril froze solid, so at least half my problem was solved. "Things are getting better," I remember thinking. The only thing worse than pointless optimism is mistaken optimism. You can quote me.

I had been on that road for about ten miles when I realized that something was wrong. First off, I hadn't seen any other riders in all that time. Second, I hadn't seen any arrows. Third, what was ten miles of slippery, nasty pavement doing in the middle of an enduro? I was

starting to miss the speedometer and route sheet I didn't have. Remembered telling Dan that, "Any just any fool.

Finally turned around, and after riding about seven miles I found an arrow on a side road. Unfortunately it wasn't the right arrow, so I ended up missing two checks. But it was an arrow. If nothing else, it might lead me back to the motel where we started. It was warm at the motel where we started.

Let me tell you a little about warmth. As a transplanted Georgian who lived in Southern California for 12 years. I tend to figure that anything below 50 degrees is chillier than absolutely necessary. I doubt very much that the inside of my bike's cylinder was 50 degrees at that point. The snow had stopped, but there was this wind, you see, and I was cold everywhere. Reminded me of the day that Albeth, the bar maid down at Chuy's, poured a whole pitcher of beer down the front of my leathers. Hell, all she had to do was say no. But that's getting off the subject, I guess.

One part of the course skirted something called the Welland Canal. That's the way that ships get from fool can follow arrows." Well, not Lake Erie to Lake Ontario. It looked cold and deep, and we ran along the edge for about a mile on a one-bike-wide rutted path. Solid bush on the right, and an 80-degree drop to the canal on the left. I've never gotten so familiar with so many bushes in my life, except for the time that . . . forget it.

After a while we got onto another skating rink trail, but this one was punctuated with big, slush-filled mudholes. I figure that it was in any one of three different holes that I lost the tools I had taped to the rear fender. Not that it really mattered. Even if I'd wanted to take off my snowmobile mitts and try to work with tools. I never would have been able to get all that tape off. Falling every hundred yards or so did the trick, though. My bike, a new Husky, looked like a weird cherry snowcone, but it started first kick everytime. You can't even depend on things to be undependable anymore.

Finally I got so cold that I just didn't give a shit. My feet were wet,

both nostrils were frozen solid, sleet was trickling down my neck and my foam face mask was so wet it was functioning like the humidifier in an air conditioner. I also had a couple of bungee cords left over from the tool kit fiasco wrapped around my rear axle, but I didn't know that. So I gassed it, and while the bike was handling kind of funny, what with the bungees and the fact that my front brake was frozen partially on, I didn't fall down anymore.

About that time I hit the third check. They looked at me kind of funny when they saw my blank card, but were too cold to say anything. Asked them if this meant the end of my attempt to trophy my first enduro. They chattered that it probably did. That made me pretty happy, because I knew that the lunch check was just down the road a bit, along with my truck and dry clothes. Tried smiling, but the face mask had frozen solid. Tried not smiling and that didn't work either. Figure I looked something like Gerald Ford with a hernia.

Made it back to the motel, pulled Dan out of the truck and grabbed for my thermos of Northland Sunrise (Canadian whiskey and Benzocaine mixed 20:1). Peeled off my boots and watched my socks steam for a while. In fact, my entire body was steaming. The windows of the truck were rapidly clouding up, which was good because I couldn't see how cold it looked out there. I was finding that even the appearance of cold depressed me. Dan told me I better get going if I was going to be on time for the second half and I . . .

That's how it was, Chet, my initiation to eastern woods riding. In retrospect, I seem to keep remembering that it wasn't so bad and that I really had a lot of fun, but then I know that the human mind does not retain the memory of pain very well. Anyway, there'll be another Frostbite next year and I want to invite you to come up here and ride it. Figure that two years in Southern California have made you forget the real pleasures. I'm sure you'll enjoy the event, and it would give you some new stories to tell Albeth and the gang down at Chuy's. Let me know if you're interested. I'm going to be filling out my tax forms that weekend, but I'll be happy to pit for you.

> Your friend and mine, Mike



SL125 recoils at the sight of snow. Can't blame it.

David Clinton: age 15 and already a World Champion Bicycle Motocross racer. David's been riding three years and has managed to win around a hundred trophies, most of them for first place. He's also #1 in the NBA, the National Bicycle Association. David is a fully sponsored Kawasaki rider and should be the happiest 15-year-old in the world.

PERSONALITY

JHE BX STARS by WINDY OSBORN

Small-sized big-timers



Eric Richter is 14, turning 15, and always does his best. He's an expert and sponsored by Webco and Rick's Bike Shop. Eric always goes for speed and is a pretty good jumper. His bike is a Webco frame with Moto Mags and it handles clean!



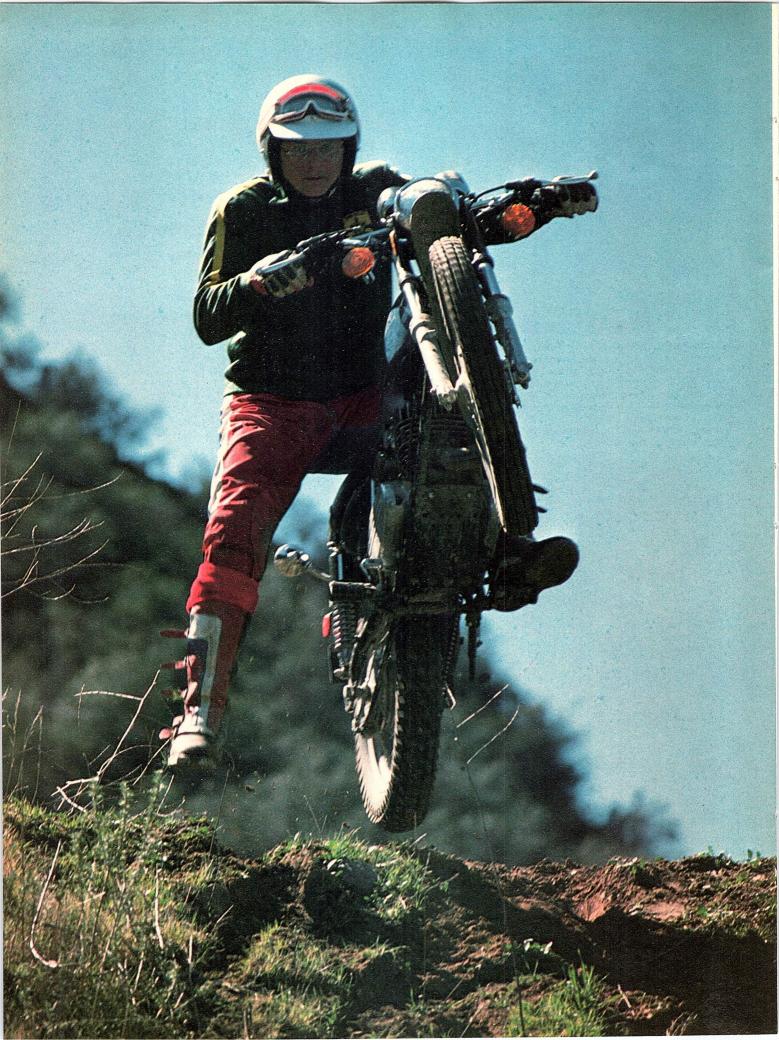
John Palfreyman and Doug Takahashi: John and Doug are the two fastest sidehack riders around. Both are experts and 16. When these two get together on a hack, they don't mess around. At the Sylmar track — which is all downhill — they come ripping down at about 45. At least. John's dad is a sidehack racer, too, but on a motorcycle.



Marvin Church: 14, and what they call a serious rider. He took second place overall at the Madison High Gold Cup and is a great starter. He watches the flagman like a hawk and is usually in front.



Thom Lund is 16 but turning 17 and will soon retire from BX. He set the fastest track record at the Los Angeles Coliseum during the third Yamaha Gold Cup. He takes riding seriously and runs to build up his muscles. He rides with higher gearing during the week to build up his legs. Thom won at Saddleback, collecting \$200 and a four-foot trophy.



QUARTER LITER FOO FOOS

Nothing — absolutely nothing — is as much fun as trail riding. Sure, motocross is great for pumping adrenaline, for venting all your pented aggression and for scoring nasty little triumphs that assert your

physical and mental superiority. Very *macho*.

And there's a definite masochistic pleasure in enduro riding. Finish a good one and you can identify with Hillary or Byrd; you get a little bit of



Honda, Honda, Kawasaki, Suzuki, Yamaha

250 STREET/ TRAILERS

by the Staff of HEAVY BIKE







the same post-event sadness and relief mixed with the feeling of accomplishment that must accompany any endeavor against odds. Still very *macho*.

Same goes for flattracking, or scrambles, or desert, even observed trials — though there the violence takes second place to the rider's enjoyment of his physical mastery over machine and terrain. A quiet *macho*.

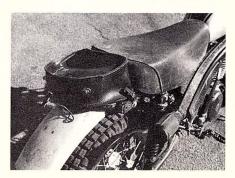
But at last comes trail riding, which is nothing but release: no zen-like mental preparations for the battle; no super-tuning of the body for strain or sudden exertion; no maintenance of specialized clothing and riding gear; no expensive modifications to the bike's suspension or motor; no trick tires to buy or arcane air pressure settings for back and front wheel; no strange instruments to attach to the bars; no lists of

numbers and letters to memorize; no arranging for pit crews or gas; no impounds or riders' meetings; no entry fees or inspection hassles; no nothing — just riding.

As a matter of fact, the less you put in, the more you get out of trail riding. "Hey, let's get together on Saturday, the 18th of next month and go trail riding; you bring the mix; I'll bring the straight gas; Fred, you bring the . . . " does not make it. Put too much in and everything starts looking like an event again.

The perfect trail ride should start very simply. Just make up your mind to go, jump on your bike and ride to your friend's house, roust him out, and get going.

The elegant simplicity of trail riding requires a hassle-free motorcycle, something that's street-legal so you can escape all that trucking and trailering and so you won't be



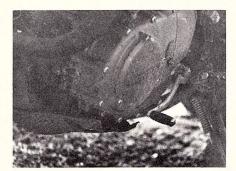
Entire preparation for 147 miles of desert was removing taillight and turn signals, and then strapping on a Malcolm Smith tool bag and a pair of Koni shocks we keep around for emergencies.

worrying about getting your bus broken into and being burned for whatever you left behind.

The trailbike has got to be reliable, otherwise you're stuck with hours of preparation before riding and you're back with the hassles of







None, not one, of the bikes in the test had a rock guard that covered all the engine essentials.

competition events.

A good woods bike, even some mild motocrossers, are perfect for riding trails, but what about the middle of the day when you want to come down out of the hills, zip through that little town, and pick up a beer at Albar's Bar & Greasy Griddle? Your MXer or enduro-legal





mount will get you busted quicker than you can dump the contents of your upper left pocket into the gutter while searching for your driver's license with the other hand.

Back to the concept of the trailbike. It already is a compromise since it's streetable, and it's also got to be a compromise in the weight-displacement department. Too heavy is a bummer; drop it and never get it up again without help. Embarrassing at the least. That leaves out giant bikes.

But too little power leaves out 125s. Unless you're good, everyone's going to leave you behind, laugh while you push up hills, and let you eat dust when you reach the pavement.

At least there are a lot of 250 street/trail machines to pick from: all the big names and lots of the little ones. We hit them all up for this shootout. Some said, "No thanks; ours is an enduro bike; call us when you're going to test real enduro bikes." OK, we wound up with six, a fair sampling. But then the Harley self-destructed the first day out and we had five.

Still a fair sampling, we thought, since out of the five remaining, we had two strong candidates for *the* best trailbike in the universe.

Another bike in the test — the XL250 — turned out to be the two-wheeled replacement for the Jeep, a pleasure vehicle solely and not to be campaigned by any but the foolish, but still the fireroading king of them all.

Enough teasing. If you want to inspect them closely, go ahead. We arranged all the sniveling and ranting separately to make things easier. So go read those parts; this



part is for praise and conclusions. And our conclusion is that the Honda MT250 is the best trailbike you can buy. It was a tough choice; the Yamaha hung in there. But here's the scam:

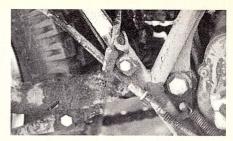
ENGINE. The MT had the strongest motor out of the batch initially. It's not the same kind of power that seems to be popular in this class, since the MT revs strongly while every other bike here is a torquer that wants you to shift before the revs get high. But it was strong. Notice the past tense. The MT is definitely worn out. And that's because it got next to zero maintenance and two miles for every one that any other bike was ridden. The fact that it got ridden so much brings us to the next subject:

HANDLING. Every bike in this test handled poorly — except the MT. It was the only machine that could be cornered when standing; the rest required sitting down and sticking out a foot. About the only thing the MT couldn't take was high-speed whoopdies. That's why its tank looks lumpy these days.



TRANS AND BRAKES. We have to snivel here. By the end of the test, the MT was responding sloppily to equal sloppiness on the part of the rider. If you got too casual about shifting up, there'd be a blank spot for a moment, a huge clunk, and then the MT would be one gear higher than you meant. The brakes worked fine, still progressive and controllable, but the trans didn't go "snick, snick" anymore. Remember that the MT got run for as many miles as all the other bikes put together. Forgive it a little for showing some wear.

SUSPENSION. Decidedly not the best in the world, but better than anything else in this class. Where rough going tweaked wrists on the other bikes, the MT let you live, and it wasn't due to lack of weight. The MT was only out-pounded by the



XL250 and both the Yamaha and Suzuki were lighter. But not by much.

COMFORT, the catch-all category. Add a second place in this vague mix of feelings and impressions to the MT's score. A lot of things went into this subtotal: riding position; saddle, bars, pegs and grips; tank width; how long and how hard our testers could ride; whether they wanted to go it again; etc. Overall, Yamaha's DT250B got the nod, but the two-stroke Honda went second.

Add them up: three firsts and two seconds and you have a class winner. The MT is a good enough trailbike to set some of us thinking about its potentials as an enduro bike. Which is a huge compliment coming from some of the competition freaks around here.

The next bike in line is easy to pick: the Yamaha, because the power is good; the machine is dependable; it handles better than the three others; it's comfortable to ride; and the suspension responds well to a knowledgeable massage. Nothing gets in the way, and with the exception of the very bottom of the bottom end, we prefer that reed valve to even the four-stroke for guts.

equal sloppiness on the part of the rider. If you got too casual about shifting up, there'd be a blank spot for a moment, a huge clunk, and then the MT would be one gear higher than you meant. The brakes has a lot of things going for it worked fine, still progressive and

Enough. Go read the individual write-ups. Just remember that MT stands for Mighty Trail 250.

Continued





KAWASAKI F11-A



Kawasaki offers a little bit more in a number of places. The bike is the fanciest looking of the batch; it's full of neat little touches (like waterproof storage under the seat for two extra spark plugs, dipstick built in for the tranny, the best choke lever setup yet, place to stash your legal documents under the seat, good tool kit, and a rider's book full of maintenance tips); and the motor delivers a lot more torque than you can reasonably expect from a piston-ported two-stroke.

Our test bike ran best if we shifted it before 6000 and if we gave it a rest between rides. Once it got hot, like a long wash where the suspension kept you in third or fourth forever, the popping and banging started. The flywheel ignition began to fail when the heat built up.

A couple of other aggravations got us too. The F11 shares rubber footpegs with the Suzuki and the Kawasaki's immediately turned upside down and stayed that way. The superfluous neutral light proved more unnecessary than usual, since it started showing neutral in first, neutral, and second.

But the major complaint was expressed a little bitterly when a beat-up rider said it was a tractor, because it plows.

Plow it did. The bike was ungainly. Turns were a chancy affair. Full lock sometimes didn't head it around. Throwing a lot of weight on the bars showed up typical trials tire traits. The best plan was leaning, laying out a leg,

and letting the bars just barely turn.

We also have to complain about the grips (they're hard and iron their waffle pattern into your palms), the brakes (the back one works too well; on the way downhill you'll look like a slalom racer), the disappearing lights (not the instruments' fault really, but other combinations of events had us crashing a lot), and the general unease the bike promoted (if you can't feel good about it, well . . .).

Back on the plus side.

Even if the suspension wasn't perfect — and it sure wasn't — it still didn't rank at the bottom of the list with these bikes. The forks hammered and on little ruts and drop-offs, they slapped down. Right afterward, your wrists crimped and your shoulders sagged. More rebound damping is necessary. And the rear end hopped. Badly. The bike was a real kick in the ass to ride. But there was none of that side-to-side eye-widening stuff that makes you wonder why you left the garage.

That means the geometry is on. Taking the F11 across the hoops and off the jumps on the trail proved that. The Kaw set up a front-high attitude and held it, letting you slop down on the rear wheel and accelerate away without a twitch.

Which brings up acceleration itself. The F11 is a one-kick starter either hot or cold. Warm-up is short. And after that, all you have to do is shift early — and grabbing gears is easy — and then just really roll. It moves out with the best here.

PRICE: (retail, West Coast) \$1089 ENGINE TYPE: Two-stroke, air-cooled sinale BORE & STROKE: 68mm x 68mm DISPLACEMENT: 246.8cc COMPRESSION RATIO: 6.4:1 CARBURETION: 30mm Mikuni HP @ RPM: 22 @ 6500 (claimed) CLUTCH: Wet, multi-plate PRIMARY DRIVE: 3.000:1, gear TRANSMISSION RATIOS: 1) 2.230:1 2) 1.470:1 3) 1.100:1 4) 0.910:1 5) 0.750:1 FINAL DRIVE: Chain 13-tooth countershaft sprocket 44-tooth rear sprocket AIR FILTRATION: Wet foam ELECTRICAL SYSTEM: Magneto with points, six-volt battery LUBRICATION: Kawasaki Injectolube RECOMMENDED FUEL: Regular gasoline RECOMMENDED OIL: Two-stroke oil FUEL CAPACITY: 9.5 liters (2.5 gallons) FRAME: Double downtube, mild steel SUSPENSION: Kawasaki forks, 10cm (4 inches) observed travel; Kawasaki shocks WHEELS & SPOKES: D.I.D. rims, steel spokes TIRES: front: 3.00x21 Yokohama trials rear: 4.00x19 Yokohama trials DIMENSIONS: Wheelbase: 138.4cm (54.9 inches) Overall length: 215cm (85.4 inches) Ground clearance: 25.7cm (10.2 inches) Seat height: 82.3cm (32.7 inches) Handlebar width: 81.5cm (32.4 inches) Weight: 120.2kg (264.4 pounds) claimed, dry 127.0kg (280 pounds), weighed with oil and one gallon of gas 44.3% on front wheel 55.7% on rear wheel BRAKES: Cable-operated drum on front; rod-operated conical drum on **INSTRUMENTS & INDICATORS:** Speedo, tach, odometer, resettable trip odometer, horn, high beam indicator, turn signal indicator, neutral indicator LIGHTS: Headlight, taillight, turn signals, brake light SILENCER: Yes, quiet SPARK ARRESTOR: Yes PRIMARY KICK: Yes WARRANTY: Six months, no limit on mileage PARTS PRICES: Clutch cable 4.90 Turn signal assembly8.50 Taillight lens 4.90 Shift lever.....7.10 Brake pedal 8.00

SUZUKI TS250M



Suzuki's silver 250 got a lot of You shifted. bonus points in the shootout. It was neat looking for one thing, except for the Buick portholes in the heat shield. It was quiet, too. Completely so. And Suzuki was the only manufacturer with the decency to raise the rear frame loop so that there's something to grab on the back of the bike. Don't the other factories know that it's death to turn signal stalks when you have to use them to hump a bike over a log?

The Suzi was a sure starter, shifted well, and had a smooth, comfortable suspension. Handling was neutral, an odd term here, where it means that things didn't go from bad to worse when you weren't paying attention. It was flat in the air, unlike the Kaw, which pivoted until its nose was up, but the suspension wasn't up to the MT Honda's. The forks didn't top or bottom, but they didn't respond and the front end skated on ripples. Bad damping in the back didn't help, but the geometry wasn't evil. The TS slides easy and it was a controllable, fun slide.

All of the last paragraph that dealt with suspension and handling should be thought of as true "within limits."

The limits of the TS are decided by the engine. Like all the rest except the MT, it is a torquer, but the Suzuki seems to sign off sooner and generate less than any of the others. The motor was dependable, metronomic, it never faltered, skipped a beat, or gave you a burst of power. It just built, then quit.

Power was unremarkable.

Without anything there to get you in trouble, problems never came up. Given the mild engine, the suspension was up to the job. That's the way the bike came off in general. Back at the truck, at the normal note-taking and bullshitting session, the latest Suzuki rider was asked his impression. Turns out there wasn't any. Bemused reply: "I just rode it for 27 miles and I didn't notice anything about it." Now that's neutral.

Actually some things did stand out. The bike was completely waterproof except for the footpegs; being covered with rubber, they made for foot-slipping and saddle-crunching when wet. But the brakes worked. All the time. Wet or dry. They put some motocrossers to shame. And the levers bent back and forth admirably. A consideration when it's time to spend good beer money on replacements.

There were a couple of other things that stood out - or up, at least the saddle stood up; it was hard to keep it latched and after servicing the bike, you'd think someone was riding with you over the bumps until you remembered to stop and slam the seat down. And another limitation to going fast was the size of the tank; it was too big to hold with your knees and you never noticed until you needed to hold on with vour knees.

Good things are there: extra fuses sealed in plastic, straps and pegs for hard to complain.

PRICE: (retail, West Coast) \$1085 ENGINE TYPE: Two-stroke, pistonported, air-cooled single BORE & STROKE: 70mm x 64mm **DISPLACEMENT: 246cc** COMPRESSION RATIO: 6.7:1 CARBURETION: 28mm Mikuni HP @ RPM: 23 @ 6500 (claimed) CLUTCH: Wet, multi-plate PRIMARY DRIVE: 3.190:1, gear TRANSMISSION RATIOS:

1) 2.420:1

2) 1.800:1

3) 1.280:1 4) 1.000:1

5) 0.830:1

FINAL DRIVE: 2.600:1, chain 15-tooth countershaft sprocket 39-tooth rear sprocket

AIR FILTRATION:

Wet, polyurethane foam ELECTRICAL SYSTEM: Suzuki P.E.I. (pointless electronic system), six-volt

LUBRICATION: Suzuki CCI injection RECOMMENDED FUEL:

85 to 95 octane gasoline RECOMMENDED OIL: Suzuki CCI oil FUEL CAPACITY: 9 liters (2.4 gallons) FRAME: Single downtube, mild steel SUSPENSION: Suzuki forks, 11cm (4.4 inches) observed travel; Suzuki shocks

WHEELS & SPOKES: Aluminum shoulderless rims

TIRES:

front: 3.00x21 IRC trials rear: 4.00x18 IRC trials DIMENSIONS:

Wheelbase: 141.5cm (55.7 inches) Overall length: 224cm (88.9 inches) Ground clearance: 27.3cm (10.8 inches)

Seat height: 82.6cm (32.8 inches) Handlebar width: 84.2cm (33.4

Weight:

111kg (245 pounds) claimed, dry 126.1kg (278 pounds), weighed with oil and one gallon of gas 43.2% on front wheel 56.8% on rear wheel

BRAKES: Cable-operated drum on front; rod-operated conical drum on

INSTRUMENTS & INDICATORS: Speedo, tach, odometer, resettable trip odometer, horn, neutral, turn signal and high beam indicators

LIGHTS: Headlight, taillights, turn signals, brake light SILENCER: Yes, very quiet SPARK ARRESTOR: Yes PRIMARY KICK: Yes

WARRANTY: 12 months or 12,000 miles PARTS PRICES:

Clutch cable 4.86 Shift lever.....5.35 Brake lever.....4.32

a friend, easy to get at parts and fillers, lightweight (comparatively), locking tank cap, etc. But it's hard to rave. Of course, that also means it's



HONDA XL-250



The four-stroke chugged on and on during the test. It took incredible abuse. Once it was lost for half an hour in a stream. Everyone who fancied himself a class A hillclimber took it out and flogged it up hills. It was ridden two-up, three-up and four-up.

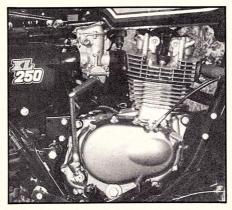
Everyone began to think of the XL as a packhorse. And while no one was willing to push it (even Gunnar declined to skid it through a lumpy turn for photos), everyone was willing to loaf along with it. One staffer suggested that it stood in second place to the MT as a trailbike. Asked to elaborate amid scoffs from everyone else, he explained, "Anyone with common sense won't go fast on it, it's too heavy and handles too bad, but if you go slow on it, it'll never let you down. Besides, it sure slides neat."

It was true. It went slow beautifully. You could actually trials-it up hills - if you can imagine a 305-pound trials bike. But it went fast downhill. Gravity took over.

The suspension was adequate, at the moderate speeds the bike inspired, but more spirited riding was uncomfortable because the handling and the weight conquered the suspenders. Twitches and hops are heavy-duty when you're playing with an excess of 300 pounds.

Bars, grips, pegs and pedals were regular Honda issue: all good stuff.

Lighting hardware stayed sound, and the Honda turn signals are easy to remove and feature snap connectors in the wiring. The Honda cush mounts on these implements let their turn signals last longest.



Our test bike had some shifting problems for the first day or so, but constant use, repositioning the shifter and a little more care cured the problem. We suspect the box needed bedding-in since all the reports we hear make it out to be one of the most dependable around. Trickedout XL-350s usually have gears out of the 250s installed. There was never another snivel.

After its baptism by water, the XL was drained and towed. It started. That, and a lot of more general clues, leads us to think that overall dependability should be one of the Honda's four strokes.

We could go on and tell you about the XL's choke up there between the instruments, how it starts second or third kick, how it takes almost forever for it to warm up, how bad trials tires are, how all the lights kept on working, how nothing fell off the bike, that all the helmet and steering locks were present, and so forth. But you know all that.

But we will remind you that the XL Honda was dependable transportation, and a fun trailbike, but

PRICE: (retail, West Coast) \$1090 ENGINE TYPE: Four-stroke, overhead cam, air-cooled single BORE & STROKE: 74mm x 57.8mm DISPLACEMENT: 248cc **COMPRESSION RATIO: 9.1:1** CARBURETION: 28mm Keihin HP @ RPM: No claims CLUTCH: Wet, multi-plate PRIMARY DRIVE: 3.125:1, gear TRANSMISSION RATIOS: 1) 2.352:1 2) 1.666:1 3) 1.280:1 4) 1.000:1 5) 0.806:1 FINAL DRIVE: 3.200:1, D.I.D. chain 15-tooth countershaft sprocket 48-tooth rear sprocket AIR FILTRATION: Paper ELECTRICAL SYSTEM: Flywheel magneto with points, six-volt battery LUBRICATION: Wet sump RECOMMENDED FUEL: Low lead or RECOMMENDED OIL: High detergent **SAE 10W-40** FUEL CAPACITY: 8 liters (2.1 gallons) FRAME: Single downtube, mild steel SUSPENSION: Honda forks, 16.5cm (6.6 inches) observed travel; Honda shocks WHEELS & SPOKES: D.I.D. shoulderless rims, steel spokes front: 3.00x21 Nitto trials rear: 4.00x18 Nitto trials **DIMENSIONS:** Wheelbase: 141cm (55.5 inches) Seat height: 84cm (33.1 inches) Handlebar width: 83cm (33 inches) Weight: 129kg (284 pounds) dry, claimed, 138.3kg (305 pounds), 43% on front wheel 57% on rear wheel BRAKES: Cable-operated conical drums, front and rear

Overall length: 214.9cm (85.3 inches) Ground clearance: 22cm (8.7 inches) weighed with oil and one gallon of gas

INSTRUMENTS & INDICATORS:

Speedo, tach, odometer, resettable trip odometer, horn, high beam indicator, turn signal indicator LIGHTS: Headlight, taillight, turn signals, brake light SILENCER: Yes, quiet SPARK ARRESTOR: Yes PRIMARY KICK: Yes WARRANTY: Six months or 4000 miles

PARTS PRICES: Rings8.60 Brake pedal 6.56

just too heavy and not what you could call exciting in the power department except on top, where the XL will walk any of the two-strokes. Still, there's a lot to be said for smoothness in your style. The XL would help you develop that. It'll make you develop it.

HONDA MT-250



We already told you it was the best in the class. It demands a little more from you because it's not the same kind of power you get from the Yamaha and the XL; it's all there, just keep the r's up. And the MT demands a little more because you have to ride it, not just sit on it. Gunnar described it as a "more agressive posture." Both the bike's and the rider's.

Yes, we know that our competition bias is showing. But look at how much more you get back if you're willing to ride the MT. The forks don't bang around mechanically and they don't put pressure on your wrists. The shocks are decent and while there was enough side hop to make Zeal eat it big on the hoops (check your bushings, folks), the damping is in the ballpark — stock. Down hills with brakes on, the MT actually responds to body shifts (nothing to brag about in most shootouts). That gets summed by saying that with the MT, you're not correcting all the time and there's no feeling of being outweighed by the bike.

Good point there. All these manufacturers imitated the Yamaha formula and even with the XL, the weight distribution is 43/57 percent. Yet the MT feels lighter. You could lay it down in a corner. Or stand up and steer. You didn't have to use your foot as a training wheel. Wouldn't wear out your boots as fast, either.

The more we rode it, the stronger the impression grew. Out of all the bikes in the test, the Honda MT was

the most dirt bike.

Don't presume that Honda left stuff off the MT or snuck in a real enduro bike just to rig the results. The MT still has the trailbike essentials: turn signals (that survive); flip-up seat (with lock, helmet hanger, and two more items that were best-of-class: the waterproof tool place with room enough to add more, and the best engineered air box here); real honest-to-God pedals and pegs; good looks; the best grips (shared with the XL); and a good saddle.

How, then, do we justify the fact that the MT was the most destroyed motorcycle around after the test? Easy. The reason that the Honda's engine is beat is because some dummy on the staff didn't even bother to service the poor bike's air cleaner either before or after he ran it around the Shamrock's California City ISDT Qualifier course. And the reason the rear brake light switch was blown completely off the bike was because the rocks are big on that Qualifier course. And the same rocks weakened a footpeg bolt, which later snapped off. And the dented tank and missing fork stop were another staffer's fault. He just thought going fast on the MT was more fun. The worn paint spots have to be attributed to all the miles we put on the bike, more of them, and harder ones too.

We apologized effusively to way.

It's just that the bike begged to be ridden.

PRICE: Not available ENGINE TYPE: Two-stroke, pistonported, air-cooled single BORE & STROKE: 70mm x 64.4mm DISPLACEMENT: 248cc COMPRESSION RATIO: 6.6:1 CARBURETION: 28mm Keihin HP@RPM: No claims CLUTCH: Wet, multi-plate PRIMARY DRIVE: 3.300:1, gear TRANSMISSION RATIOS: 1) 2.235:1 2) 1.571:1 3) 1.160:1 4) 0.896:1 5) 0.718:1 FINAL DRIVE: 2.933:1, D.I.D. chain 15-tooth countershaft sprocket 44-tooth rear sprocket AIR FILTRATION: Wet foam ELECTRICAL SYSTEM: Flywheel magneto with points LUBRICATION: Oil injection RECOMMENDED FUEL: Low lead or RECOMMENDED OIL: Two-cycle motor oil FUEL CAPACITY: 8.5 liters (2.2 gallons) FRAME: Single downtube, mild steel SUSPENSION: Honda forks, 16.5cm (6.6 inches) observed travel; Honda shocks WHEELS & SPOKES: D.I.D. shoulderless, steel spokes TIRES: front: 3.00x21 Nitto trials rear: 4.00x18 Nitto trials DIMENSIONS: Wheelbase: 144cm (56.7 inches) Overall length: 215.9cm (85 inches) Ground clearance: 25.8cm (10.2 inches) Seat height: 83.8cm (33 inches) Handlebar width: 86.3cm (34 inches) Weight: 118kg (260 pounds) claimed, dry 126.1kg (278 pounds), weighed with oil and one gallon of gas 43.2% on front wheel 56.8% on rear wheel BRAKES: Cable-operated conical drums, front and rear INSTRUMENTS & INDICATORS: Speedo, tach, odometer, resettable trip odometer, horn, high beam indicator, turn signal indicator LIGHTS: Headlight, taillight, turn signals, brake light SILENCER: Yes, quiet SPARK ARRESTOR: Yes PRIMARY KICK: Yes WARRANTY: Six months or 4000 miles PARTS PRICES:

Now with some Preston Pettys, some good knobbies, and without those turn signals, we could really And we gave in, being weak that preserve some nature

YAMAHA DT250B

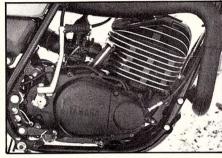


Yamaha's street/trail entry is the standard against which all these motorcycles must be measured. The DT1 invented the class and then it stayed on top while everyone else and his holding company jumped on for a profitable ride. It's still on top in a lot of ways. Motor is one of the ways. We don't dyno anything but race bikes these days, so we can't show you a chart, but we can give you a description. After a couple of kicks and a quick waiting period, the DT has power now! Then it proceeds to get some more. Then still more. Then you shift. Neat. But the other direction is the impressive one. Power on down the trail, do some slowing, swing the turn, and start up. The higher you go, the more gears down, and finally it's first. Revs are dropping. You're climbing. Near the top it's loose and lumpy. Searching for traction you let the revs go way down. It still pulls. Strong.

Then comes the tragic flaw. It happens way down. It feels like about 2500, but we never had time to look at the tach to be sure. The sparks stop like you'd hit a kill switch. There just isn't enough flywheel effect in the engine. You and a 278-pound motorcycle are now four feet from the top of this rutted, rock-studded hill. Boo!

The Yamaha is stronger than even the four-stroke up to this cut-off point. And it's a shame, because it sucks you into these situations by performing so well until then. You wouldn't make the mistake with any of the others; you know they don't have the grunt to cut it.

Comfort is another strong point, except for those hillsides, because the Yam really lets you loaf. You use the



motor, not the steering, to cut corners; you use the throttle, not the suspension, to smooth out the trail. You actually don't have to ride it; you can just sit on it.

That is a comfort. After all, neither the suspension or the handling is dynamite. The forks top constantly off the small stuff and the shocks work as a governor on any high-speed work. It steers as if the head bearings were too tight and you soon give up anything but throttle/sit-down turning.

On the way back down from that hill, the combination of light switch rear brake, harsh shocks and just plain heft sets up a chattering that'll warn anyone below you.

Don't get us wrong; it's still the Burger King to the Berkshires special; we just don't think you ought to try to get through the Berkshires with it.

Back down on the flats, there's still a lot about the DT to turn you on. The convenience features are there and they're sano, not just tacked on as afterthoughts; stuff like the locking gas cap, the pipe that can't roast you even if it wanted to, the fabulous front brake, good pegs and pedals, a tool kit you can open without a tool (unlike the Kawasaki's), and the best lever covers in the group.

Think about all that and add the

PRICE: (retail, West Coast) \$1229
ENGINE TYPE:Two-stroke, reed-valved, air-cooled single
BORE & STROKE: 70mm x 64mm
DISPLACEMENT: 246cc
COMPRESSION RATIO: 6.8:1
CARBURETION: 28mm Mikuni
HP @ RPM: None claimed, none measured
CLUTCH: Wet, multi-plate
PRIMARY DRIVE: 2.826:1, gear
TRANSMISSION RATIOS:
1) 2.538:1

2) 1.789:1 3) 1.153:1 4) 1.000:1

5) 0.766:1
FINAL DRIVE: 3.357:1, D.I.D. chain
14-tooth countershaft sprocket
47-tooth rear sprocket
AIR FILTRATION: Wet foam filter

AIR FILTRATION: Wet foam filter ELECTRICAL SYSTEM:

Mitsubishi flywheel magneto (with points), six-volt battery LUBRICATION: Autolube injection RECOMMENDED FUEL: Low lead, 90 + octane gasoline

RECOMMENDED OIL: Yamalube 2-cycle

FUEL CAPACITY: 9 liters (2.4 gallons) FRAME: Double downtube, mild steel SUSPENSION: Yamaha forks, 16cm (6.3 inches) observed travel;

Yamaha Thermal Phase shocks WHEELS & SPOKES: Steel, shoulderless rims

front: 3.00x21 Dunlop trials rear: 4.00x18 Dunlop trials

Wheelbase: 141.5cm (55.7 inches) Overall length: 218cm (85.8 inches) Ground clearance: 21.7cm (8.6 inches)

Seat height: 81.5cm (32.4 inches) Handlebar width: 87cm (34.3 inches) Weight: 126.1kg (278 pounds); weighed with oil and one gallon of gas 42.8% on front wheel 57.2% on rear wheel

BRAKES: Cable-operated conical drum on front; rod-operated conical drum on rear

INSTRUMENTS & INDICATORS: Speedo, tach, odometer, resettable trip odometer, horn, high beam indicator, turn signal indicator

LIGHTS: Headlight, taillight, turn signals, brake light SILENCER: Yes, quiet SPARK ARRESTOR: Yes PRIMARY KICK: Yes

WARRANTY: Six months or 4000 miles,

parts and labor PARTS PRICES:

 Piston assembly
 \$18.32

 Rings
 6.90

 Clutch cable
 4.55

 Cylinder
 84.53

 Shift lever
 4.80

 Brake pedal
 7.68

 Clutch lever
 3.90

 Reeds (each)
 2.00

kind of power the DT offers and you'll have a bike with near the same statistics as everything else in the class — but one that seems much more nimble.

It's like setting a piece of chocolate cake in front of a weight watcher. It's like dangling a diamond necklace in front of a jewel thief. It's like showing a CZ to George.

By "it," we mean asking Don whether he would like to ride Larry Roeseler's Harley Baja. For you poor unfortunates who do not keep up on what is happening in California desert racing, Larry Roeseler holds the Number One plate in the trailbike class. And he earned that plate on his Harley Baja. And we dangled that Baja, the bike that

WHAT IT'S LIKE

Larry Roeseler's Hustlin' Harley

NUMBER ONE ONE DESERT BIKE





At 17 years old he has quite a bit of riding ahead of him.



earned Number One in the desert, in front of Don, a hopelessly addicted desert racer.

Of course he wanted to ride it!

So we arranged a trip to the desert to see how different Larry's bike is from the normal run-of-the-mill desert bike. Don's bike is as run-ofthe-mill as they come, so we figured he would be able to tell how much difference the bike makes in racing. In the back of his mind he was hoping the bike was the whole difference; then he'd just go out, set up a bike like Larry's and . . .

When we got to Larry's house we lost no time in checking out the bike. It was well used, to say the least. The seat was sunken in where he was used to sitting, homemade modifications abounded. Well, this was no way to evaluate a bike, so we loaded

up and took off.

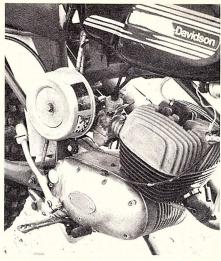
Our riding spot was not far from Larry's home outside of San Bernardino. Hills and desert with the typical thousand worn trails. Some of Larry's hotshoe buddies showed up (fast guys seem to travel in packs) and we set off for some play riding. Larry wanted to show us a jump where he broke his arm. Fine. But we weren't about to go over it, not at any speed. Then he wanted to show us a trail about ten inches wide with 40-foot dropoffs on each side. We were already on the trail before we knew which one it was, so there was no turning back. It's just not right for humans to do things like that. Despite the odds, we made it.

But on to the bike. The most striking thing about it is that there is nothing really striking. We've ridden Bajas before and this one was not that much different. Personal touches, such as the worn-in seat, were everywhere on the bike and gave it its own personality. Bars and grips, of course, but everyone likes to suit himself in this area.

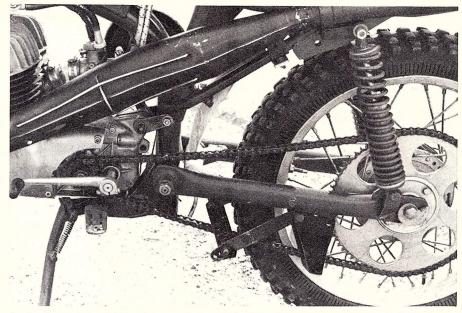
Then we took it in the real rough stuff and into the fast trails you always find in a desert race. The bike inspires confidence. It ran clean and the suspension was dialed in perfectly. Perfectly, anyway, for Larry (130 pounds). Don was bottoming the shocks quite often because he wears heavier boots. But it never side-hopped — which is probably the most important thing in suspension for a desert bike. When we got more used to the bike we took it back in the tight rough throttle completely."



Thar it sits.



Different air cleaner, killer pegs, CDI ignition, Mikuni carb, and trick bungee cords to hold on the seat.



And the port side. Here we have Curnutts, humongous modified pipe, and check out the tabs welded from the shock mount to the swingarm.

stuff. Down some hills we couldn't describe if we wanted to and through some sand washes where the pegs were scraping the sides.

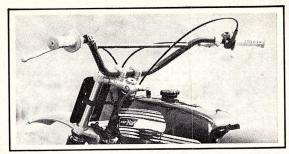
We were becoming more and more impressed with the bike. There was nothing that really jumped out and grabbed you, but everything fit together exactly. For 100cc, the power was good and it still had some bottom end. But it sputtered terribly in the mid-range, so we asked Larry about it.

Well, when you're flat-out across the desert the bike is getting a full flow of gas through the main jet. But when you back off the throttle the bike is suddenly getting no gas. So I run the needle real rich which forces in gas even when I back off the

Makes sense. As soon as we're good enough to hold the throttle wide open for minutes at a time we'll richen up the needle, too.

Along with good power came good handling. Ceriani forks made the trailbike feel smooth and safe. Harley frame geometry helps to make the bike respectable for the desert. It was made to go in a straight line. With almost a foot of ground clearance and a high center of gravity, the Baja wasn't exactly made for flying around a motocross course. Straight lines are where it's at anyway, sez Don.

So, are good power and good handling all it takes to make a bike capable of earning a Number One plate? No, there's much more to the bike than handling and power.



Notice the kill switch, bars, levers, grips and fenders.



If you know what you're doing, a trailbike acts just like a real motorcycle.

Attributes much more subtle. Larry said he hasn't cleaned his air cleaner in a few races. So what has that got to do with anything? He says he hasn't cleaned it because everything is working right. Of course we don't recommend not cleaning your air cleaner just because the engine still runs, but there is a lesson to be learned here. Larry also said that for a few months last year he was splitting the cases every week. Why? Because everything, particularly the gears, wasn't working right. He kept at it, tearing it completely down every week until it was right. Really right. So that when someone like Don rode it they'd say, "It sure does fit together good." Don couldn't put a finger on how the bike felt, but it felt together. And it felt together

because it was right on. Larry put in different gears until he found "a good set." Then he didn't touch it. The whole bike is like that. Find what works, then just normal maintenance will do.

And that's what a bike must be to be capable of earning a Number One plate. If you want to know what Larry has found to be the setup for him, he was willing to share his secrets. After all, it really does take more than the motorcycle, no matter how good it runs. (Damn.)

So here it is. Slap a 3.50x21 six-ply Cheng Shin on the front and a 3.50x18 on the rear. Some D.I.D.s for rims. Everyone uses Preston Petty fenders anyway, so there's no need telling you that.

Ceriani forks for the front.

(Keep trying different fork oils till you find what is right for you — every week, every day if you have to.) Curnutt shocks for the rear. Charlie Curnutt sets up the springs by a formula for each person according to his weight, bike and type of riding, so hopefully you won't have to mess with spring rates. Weld some tabs from the swingarm to the bottom of the shock mount to sturdy up the shocks.

Details are always important, too. Magura levers. Torque Engineering kill switch. Oury grips. Terry cables with Teflon. Filtron air cleaner with a Suzuki hose to the carb. Reynolds 428 chain. Champion plugs. A 72-tooth rear sprocket.

Changes to the engine were a bit more complicated. Larry uses a Harley road racing barrel. For a piston he went to Yamaha, the old ones before they had reed valves, and uses only the top ring. To get the gas in the engine he uses a 28mm Mikuni. We don't have to tell you about jetting. Keep at it until it's right. Jack Krizman modified the pipe but we couldn't get dimensions out of him.

The clutch is straight out of a Harley 125. CDI ignition is right out of a 250 Harley. He also installed some shift stops in the transmission so that you can't overshift. It makes shifting harder than normal, but it will never go from second past third or whatever.

Larry swears by the last modification, but we can't with a clear conscience recommend it. It's weld-on footpegs. That means they don't fold up. Those footpegs did their best to take off Don's leg when he got stuck under the peg going down a hill. Do it if you like.

And that's it. Many modifications, but the most important thing is getting them to all fit together.

Most of the trick items for the Harley you can pick up at the local shop. Here are some other addresses you might need:

CURNUTT MFG. 75992 Baseline 29 Palms, CA 92277

TORQUE ENGINEERING 19753 Bahama St. Northridge, CA 91343 (213) 882-4321

TERRY INDUSTRIES P.O. Box 1321 Hesperia, CA 92345 (714) 244-3139



E'VE ALWAYS had a good time together, but that Saturday morning Stephen was up to something. He got up early, shaved, cooked breakfast—orange juice, waffles, eggs over-easy, coffee with real cream—and served it to me in bed. Very cozy. Then he set the tray aside, snuggled in close and told me the news. "This afternoon, I'm going to buy something I've always wanted."

"What's that?" I said.

"A motorcycle."

"That's nice. What kind?"

"A Kawasaki".

"Hold on, fella," I said, "I've heard about Kawasaki. You'll good-time yourself into the sunset and I'll never see you again."

"But I'll send you picture postcards," he said snuggling closer.

"Forget it," I said, "you get a motorcycle, I get a motorcycle."

That afternoon he picked out his and I picked out mine, just my size and easy to ride. Anywhere.

Now we spend most of our week-ends riding together, and it's super.

Especially finding those out-of-the-way places where we can enjoy doing anything we want. Just the two of us.

Kawasak

"82 HORSEPOWER AT THE REAR WHEEL, REALLY?"

How not to read the pump

by GUNNAR LINDSTROM

Have you noticed how many manufacturers have stopped publishing horsepower figures? And tried to figure out why? Or have you ever bought a bike just because the brochure said it had more ponies?

Here's the truth: dyno readings on different bikes are not comparable. Horsepower figures are often useless and sometimes they're misleading.

Take a look at how torque and horsepower are measured and learn for yourself how to analyze the numbers.

First of all, horsepower is a measure of doing work, one horsepower being equal to 550 footpounds a second. That time element is there because it's work being measured, not just force. Push on a building and nothing happens; that's force. Push a 550-pound trailer one foot in one second and that's horsepower. (The metric form of expressing work is watts, or kilowatts, where a kilowatt is equal to 1.34 horsepower — just like the electric company reads your meter.)

But a dynamometer actually reads torque, the measure of rotational use a stand for just the engine, a lot force — engines spin, remember? —

times rpm, the rate of spinning. (To lapse into metrics again, that's kilopond-meters or kpm, which we're not even going to attempt to explain.) Anyway, to keep things simple, we'll stick with horsepower (hp) and foot-pounds (ft.-lbs.).

Back to the dynamometer and its tachometer. Now we have to connect the bike: the easiest way is to put the rear wheel onto rollers connected to the dyno, start the bike up and put it in gear. But wheelspin, especially with knobby tires, makes this a very inaccurate method. It's better to remove the rear wheel and hook the chain up directly to the dyno. And better yet would be to connect the 'sprocket shaft, or crankshaft, direct via a coupling to the dyno input shaft. By the way, worn sprockets and chains are real horsepowerrobbers. A new, well-oiled chain, on good sprockets, has a loss factor of about two to three percent. A worn chain on worn sprockets and, on top of that, a dry chain, can cost you 15 percent of your output.

Modern motorcycle laboratories of gadgets, like thermocouples for

reading temperatures, and pressure measuring devices and flow meters for fuel consumption - all hooked up to the engine. The data is read outside a three-glass window, away from the noise and fumes. From there you control the engine throttle and the brake load. Sometimes there are so many variables and instruments to keep your eyes on that a multi-channel recorder is used, so that the readings can be reviewed later at a slower pace.

With all these trick gadgets in use, you'll probably ask why you can't compare one horsepower reading with another. Well, there are still a number of other variables that cannot be controlled, and there are also many different ways of using the dyno. Let us explain a few, like cold and hot readings off the dyno.

As you know, an engine is considerably stronger when it's cold, compared to when it's thoroughly warmed up. The difference is sometimes greater than ten percent. By adjusting compression ratio and ignition advance to favor cold readings, that figure can be raised somewhat beyond ten percent.

An engine on a dyno can be made to run under perfect conditions: optimum jetting, good fan cooling (which means you can use higher compression and still keep the temperature down), and no air cleaner has to be used. Because of all the monitoring equipment, a smaller safety margin can be used when dyno running than would be possible with field running.

Another important factor is the weather conditions. Although they can have a great influence on the reading, there are charts for correcting readings to standard conditions.

Friction losses in the transmission are another important factor. Is the reading taken on the crankshaft or on the countershaft? A difference of up to ten percent is not unusual.

With all the variables, you will understand why the same engine can have two very different readings depending on when, where and how it was measured. That's why dyno charts and power curves have to be used very carefully when it comes to comparisons. Only curves run on the same dyno and taken the same way and then corrected to standard conditions can be compared to each other.

Actually, what you read off the dyno scale is the torque, from which, knowing the rpm, the horse-power figure can be calculated.

If a maximum output power curve is to be run, the engine is started, and if the reading is not via the crankshaft, a proper gear is selected, usually the highest. The throttle is then opened up, and the brake is applied so that the rpm stay around the maximum torque. After three or four minutes, during which the instruments are carefully watched, the engine is hot, and it's time to take the first reading. The brake is loosened up slightly so that the maximum rpm is reached at which a reading is desirable. After the r's have stabilized at this setting, the reading is taken off the scale, and more brake is applied to bring the engine down to the next rpm at which a reading will be taken. This is usually done at every 500 r's from maximum down to when the engine chokes itself to death.

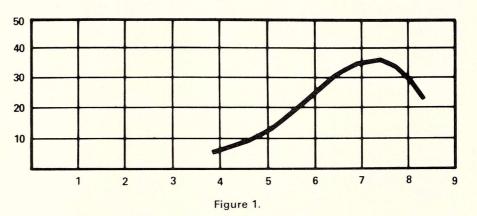
From these torque readings, the horsepower output can be easily calculated with the help of the rpm and a constant factor for the particular dyno in question, multi-

plied by the overall gearing of the engine if the tranny is used, and finally, making a correction for weather conditions. The correction factor should always be shown on the chart.

After we have all these numbers down on paper, the next thing to do is to draw the curve on graph paper. It's also very important to note all parts that have been altered on the engine, such as: pipe, jetting, timing, compression, etc. Now, we either run the other engine we are comparing, or do the mods to the first engine and then run a new power curve, which we add onto the graph paper. Now we can sit down and evaluate the difference between the two curves.

What else is there to look for on a power curve? If you have two different graphs, the first thing to

check is if the scales correspond. Look at Figure 182 to see what we mean. Both these curves are from the same run, but drawn with different scales. If you want to compare two bikes, you will put both curves on one graph. Start at the bottom and read horsepower and rpm off one chart, look up the corresponding point on the other graph, and make a small "x" there. Then go 500 rpm higher, find the horsepower figure for that rpm, and transfer it over, and so on. When you are done, you will have a number of x's on the paper. Now try to connect these x's with a pen of a different color than the curve already on the chart. You can either draw straight lines with a ruler between the x's or try smoother bends. Remember that at any point between the x's, we are assuming that the



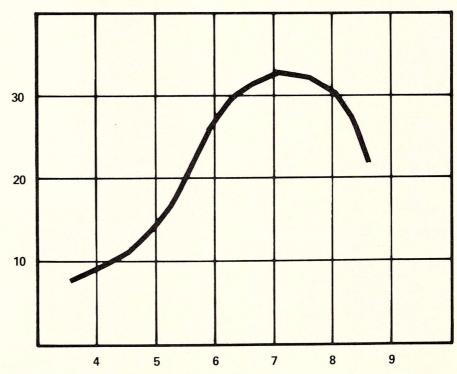


Figure 2. The same curve on two different scales.

curve will go in a straight line.

Now you should have two curves on your chart, and you can start comparing. Be very careful. Don't draw any quick conclusions from just the power curves. Use this only as a hint as to what the bike can do and make allowances for how the bike is to be used. On a smalldisplacement bike, you have to tolerate a narrower powerband and more shifting than on a bigger bike. Usually, the thing to look for is the buildup of power from the bottom. Be wary if there is a sudden buildup before it reaches the power peak, or if the power drops off suddenly. This usually indicates an engine that is hard to ride. The straighter the line of the power curve on its way to the peak, the better. The actual number of horsepower at the peak is not all that important. Take a look at what that control the rate of acceleration; the most important ones are:

- the power curve, its shape and the power output;
 - the gear ratio;
 - how fast you can shift:
 - the weight of bike and rider;
 - the suspension (mainly rear):
- traction (includes brand and shape of tire, air pressure, and the weight on the rear wheel);
- the center of gravity (CG) location and handling; and
- rider ability (weight distribution, shifting points, being able to ride in a straight line, etc).

Let us explain a few of these points. Power curve and gear ratios are very closely connected factors. To take an example, it would be quite impossible to have a threespeed 125cc bike and gear it so it

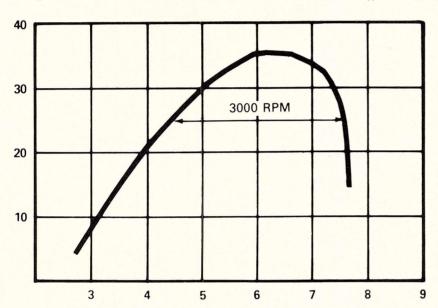


Figure #3 Powerband illustration.

the engine does after the power peak is reached. If it takes a big dive, it means that the engine stops revving, which makes it critical that it be upshifted at the right time.

It is assumed that a 4.50x18 rear tire on dirt can only transfer about 25 rear wheel horsepower to the ground at those speeds normal in motocross (0 to 50 mph; 0 to 80 kilometers per hour). You could also use the graph to see how wide the 25-horsepower range is, like we did in Figure 3. Also remember that 2000 r's between 10-12,000 is a narrower powerband than 2000 r's between 4-6000. This is just another thing to look for.

Horsepower does not equal

would run 60 miles per hour and still be able to start in first gear. On the other hand, if we could make a 15-speed 125, and drag it through the gears, we would spend all afternoon shifting. And there would be little time for the engine to put the power to the ground. Therefore, a compromise is best: a powerband that is wide enough and a five or six-speed gearbox spaced to match.

If the gearbox is very hard to shift, and if care has to be taken not to miss shifts, quite a distance is covered during every shift, where the engine is not connected to the ground and pulling. Going through four gear changes (from first to fifth), this dead space can sometimes acceleration; there are other factors amount to 25 percent of the distance the bike has run. It's therefore very important that you learn to shift quickly and precisely.

It is also important to shift at the right time. Most riders, especially on larger bikes, shift too late and let the engine rev too much. You have to learn shift points by experience, or by dragging against the clock, or with a friend. Make some tests.

It's quite obvious that the lighter the bike and rider, the quicker the acceleration can be.

The better the rear suspension is, the more the wheel will follow the ground and transmit all that power. Think about what a car with poor shocks will do when accelerating on a choppy dirt road, or up a hill.

If we now can get the power to the rear wheel, it has to be transferred from there to the ground. A tire with sharp edges will bite better on grass and slippery stuff, while a tire with more rubber surface on the ground will pull better on hard surfaces. A motocross tire with worn and round knobs pulls much better on hard concrete surfaces than a new motocross tire. But the best would probably be a street or trials tire. The flattrackers use an almost-street tire for their racing. To pull well, the air pressure must not be too high. A good rule is, the lower the better, or as low as you can get by with on the track without getting a flat or spinning the tire on the rim. Good tire locks are a must.

The center of gravity and the bike's handling you cannot do very much about. The higher the CG, the quicker the bike will go on its rear wheel, somewhat undesirable at this time. All you can do is lean forward, but that's hard to do every time you accelerate during a 30-minute moto.

It doesn't matter how you look at it, it finally comes down to the rider to make the final decisions, like when to let the clutch go, what gear to be in, when to shift to the next gear, where to sit on the bike, riding the best line, and keeping your bike in good shape.

If you take all these facts into consideration, you will realize that the maximum power output is not quite as important as some think. The bike with the most horsepower listed does not always get the holeshot.

Does all this sound like we're trying to make you look at listed horsepower figures with a smile? You bet.

Ever wonder how it would be if our CZ freak, ol' MX MX MX took up observed trials? Hmmm . . .

Past the start sign. Snap that throttle off. Wide closed in first. D.E.. CELERATION!!! Down the embankment. Lay off that rear brake. Think Lane Leavitt. Bottom coming up. Oh, no! Where'd that rock come from? Gotta gassit over. Up, baby. Super. Now there's a big wet hole. I don't remember that. I did remember to walk this section. didn't I? Ullpp. No, I didn't. I was in the van. Full lock left. Made it. Not bad.

Oh my gawd. Boulders. Miles and miles of boulders. Big ones. Little ones. Look over there. I can almost see some soil. Watch that red stake coming up on the left. Sure wish there was a berm handy. Lessee, only have to go about 40 yards over these stones. Bonk, babam, scronk, bam. Keep on chuggin', you rock hound. Hey, this is bitchin'.

Almost through the section. What's left? Over the log, turn onto that off-camber and up the embankment. Scrape. Good ol' bash plate. Please don't slide sideways down the side of the hill. Cherry Stockton's watching. Way to go. Now throttle it. Up, up, over. Cleaned the trap! Wow! That one's for you, Jaroslav. This thing's really slow. Turns like a blimp. Did you see that traction on the off-camber? Hunkers like a bunker. Really!

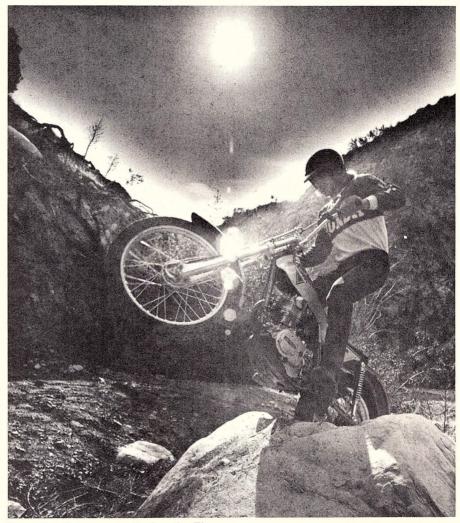
Was it only 1971 . . . ah, 1969, Tack . . . er. Neal Armstrong put his size elevens on the moon and said: That's one giant leap for me and one small . . . oh you know. What's it all prove? Walking on the moon. Why, it proves that the U.S. scooped up better German scientists than the Russians did after World War Two.

In a way trials machinery development is like rocketry, only the nations are different. Who can say which is more important: dune buggying on the moon or winning the Scottish Trials? Only, instead of Russians and Americans using Germans, it's a question of Japan and Spain divvying up the Englishmen. And so it was early last year that Honda signed up the Werhner Von Braun of observed trials, Sammy Miller, as a development consultant for their TL250. Honda, who put the first trials bike from Japan on the market in the spring of '73, is the last to offer a 250.

THE LONE THUMPER

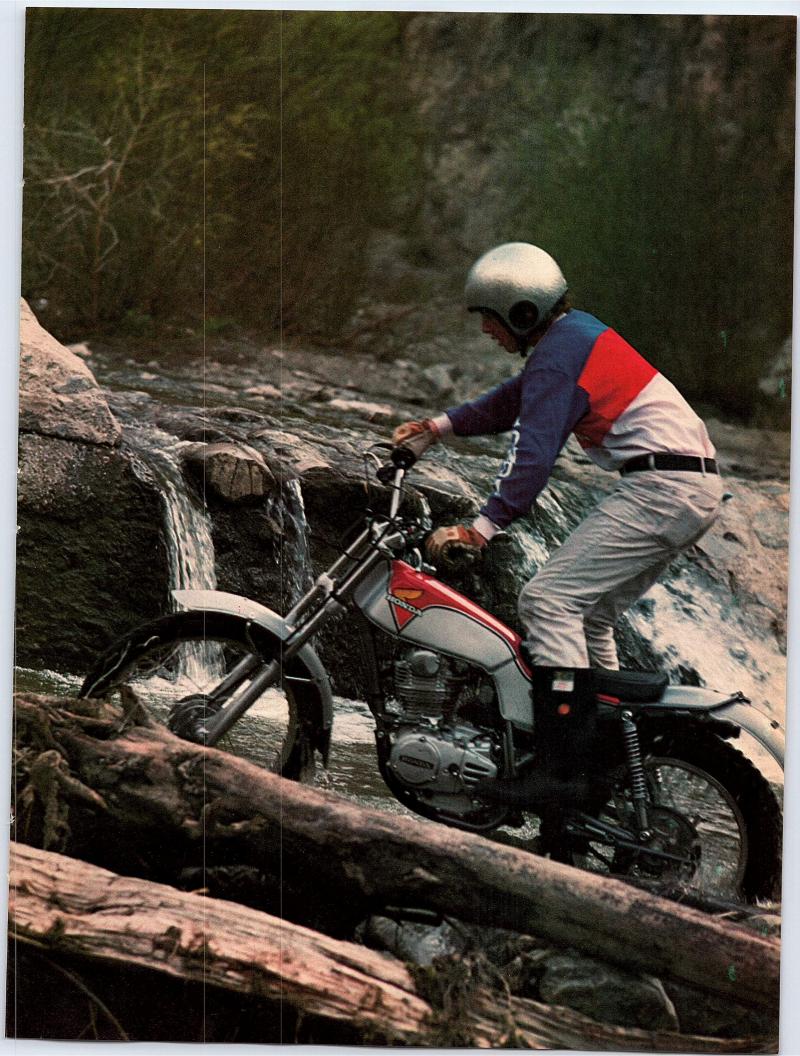
How slow can four valves go?

HONDATL 250 by the Staff of SLOW BIKE



Doug Bradbury moon testing the TL.





Back in '73 Honda hired Number One Plate Gary Jones to put their new 250 Elsinore before the public. To bolster their introduction of the TL250 they hired National Number Two Marland Whaley and National Number Four Mark Eggar, who both rode for Montesa last year, and National Number Six Joe Guglielmelli, who rode for Yamaha. This trio joined two other riders from the top 15 National riders, Manager Bob Nickelsen and George Smith, III.

Competition success can spur sales, at least that's the apparent game plan, as it was with the Elsinores.

The TL250 is the only four-stroke in the 250 or larger market from the seven trials bike builders. Another distinguishable characteristic is weight. The owner's manual says 218 pounds dry. No oil, no gas, no nothing. A 350 Sherpa weighs 213 with a gallon of gas, ready to ride. Fill up the TL's gallon capacity tank, put oil in it and the scales read

238 pounds. Yes, sports fans, the TL is a heavy one.

There are several reasons for the weight. First, four-stroke engines are heavier than two-strokes. You can only use so much trick metal in putting one together for production before the price tag gets ridiculous.

The frame is good ol' heavy-duty steel. They built themselves one that looks like it's going to last. George observed the massive gussets and the stout tubing and slowly turned East, faced Czechoslovakia and uttered Brawny Beef Bogger.

Four-stroke power. Back in the days of Ike and Camelot when Sammy Miller was building his reputation on good ol' GOV132, his drastically reworked and lightened 499cc Ariel four-banger, the Englanders wouldn't even admit to the existence of the two-stroke. Then Miller went to Bultaco and helped build the Sherpa T that still rules the

roost today.

What kind of a trials powerplant is the heavily-modified four-valver XL250? Damn good one. People like Bernie Schreiber, Marland Whaley and Mike Griffitts, the top three plates in Southern California's A.T.A., say so. Okay, so Marland rides for them, but when you're trying to topple Lane Leavitt off the mountain you don't switch to a machine that can't cut the mustard. Griffitts said it had the best traction of any bike he's ridden, even with the four-ply tires. Schreiber said it tracked better than anything on wet ground although it wasn't as snappy as his Bul right off the bottom.

Throttle response is good. Unlike the TL125 where you have to think ahead a beat, power is there when you twist it on. It takes a while to get used to the four-stroke power shutoff as soon as the throttle is backed off. Leave the gas on a hair longer than with a two-stroke. The four-stroke's engine braking is super on the downhills. And it revs higher than any of the two-strokes. That's a big help for a sustained uphill blast in a section.

The first thing the trials shoes do with a bike is set it so it won't idle. The routine is, turn off the throttle, pop, pop, stall. This gives them lower rpm performance. After diddling around we found that the TL is an idler. Works better; besides, you can't easily un-idle it.

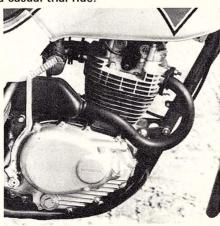
Consider a sustained uphill, a mile or so, on a tough trials loop. Some of



Bernie Schreiber on a casual trial ride.



Looks something like an XL250, doesn't it?



Muffler-like device is actually a torque reducer.

the two-strokes reach the top steaming, smoking, popping, making all kinds of noises. The TL just sat there and said: Hey, man. Let's keep going.

The drive chain isn't the smallish 428 stuff found on the other Japanese models. It isn't the usual 520 found on the Spanish bikes, either. It has 428 dimensions, but the plates are thicker to withstand bogging abuse.

How about gearing? Tooth counts of 14 and 57 figure out to a 4.07 ratio. That's a bit higher than the Sherpa T's 4.18. Transmission ratios for the TL are higher (and the primary ratio lower — 3.26 to 2.38) when compared to the Bul. They start with a 3.00 first and finish with a 0.75 overdrive for fifth. The Bul ranges from 3.79 to 1.00. The stock gearing seemed right in the ballpark for just about everyone who rode the bike. Third seems a bit high to be of much use in twisty-type competition. By comparison the Sherpa's third (2.26) just about matches the TL's second (2.29). But the TL smoked all comers on fireroad-speed runs.

While shifting isn't as smooth as a duck's . . . tail in syrup, it's good for a trials machine. The transmission is very trailable - quick shifts are easy, it isn't necessary to back off the gas as some bikes require, it will shift without the clutch if you've a mind to, and it's easy to drop gears when blasting up old Banzai. Some trials trannies aren't so accommodating during trail riding. As plonkers go, neutral is fairly easy to come by. Once a gear is selected it can't be easily budged. We never got any false neutrals between gears when shifting. The shift lever can be mounted at the preferred ten o'clock position and still be shifted with a heel on the footpeg for stability.

Clutches are no big thing on a trials iron. The TL's works, doesn't heat up if it's imposed upon.

Starting. There's a lot of rotational mass and it only fires every other stroke. A good, strong kick works best. Sometimes it takes a couple of extra kicks. Keeping the throttle closed on repeat efforts seems to work best.

The steel skid plate doesn't offer case protection. It's going to take a lot of abuse. The TL has 101/4 inches of ground clearance at the lowest point, just in front of the pegs. Our plate had more scrapes than a sailor on three-day shore leave, but held

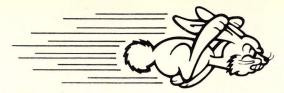
lower the clearance even more. Fortunately the cases are rather sturdy. They took some pretty good thumps.

The location of the minimum ground clearance can be just as, or more, important than how much clearance there is. Almost everyone, upon first riding the bike, commented on its low ground clearance, blaming the tall four-stroke plant.

together. Accessory bash plates could prohibit raising the engine too much. Rocks that other bikes would clear initially scraped the TL's underbelly. Yet in measuring the Sherpa (with a Miura plate on), we came up with 10½ inches. How come the scraping? The Bul's minimal clearance is toward the front of the engine, about ten inches ahead of where it is on the TL. When the rider lofts the front end the low point clears first and the clearance Center of gravity considerations keeps getting taller. Another ex-



This off-camber was about 20 feet above the ground level.



Run with the rabbit-the hair-raising new high-performance synthetic cycle oil from Union Carbide

Specially designed synthetic oil, both 2-stroke and 4-stroke, offers several distinct advantages to provide reduced maintenance costs and longer engine life.

2-STROKE HIGH-PERFORMANCE SYNTHETIC OIL:

Ashless for reduced combustion chamber deposits, less port blocking, less spark plug fouling and cleaner exhaust systems and mufflers.

Fights ring sticking, piston deposits, piston burning and rust and corrosion.

Has high film strength to minimize wear.



4-STROKE HIGH-PERFORMANCE SYNTHETIC OIL:

Surpasses API Service SE requirements; can be used for SD, SC and MS service (SAE 10W-40).

Has high natural viscosity index.

Maintains high film strength to protect against valve train wear and extend engine life.

Protects against high-temperature oxidation and deposits, sludge, varnish, rust and corrosion.

Run with the rabbit—it's worth every penny in performance!



Product available in the following states: Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Hampshire, New York,
North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont, Wisconsin.

planation. If you forget to leave the throttle on a hair longer because of the four-stroke's power pattern, the front end drops a little too soon, right where the minimal clearance is. Live with the bike a while and you get the hang of it.

The bike feels wide standing on the pegs. That's because it is. Some of the factory riders remove their side panels and the muffler heat shield. The tape measure showed why. The bike is about two inches narrower between the thighs that way and permits more body English.

Measured from the ends of the pegs, the TL is an inch wider than a Bul, and yet the pegs themselves are each a half-inch shorter and the frame width at the pegs is almost identical for the two bikes. The difference is in the peg mounts. The Bul's pegs pivot just out from the frame tubes, the TL's peg mounts extend out an inch on both sides before the peg pivot point. Reason? The bowing out of the frame in the middle. If the pegs were mounted right in against the frame, the rider would have to be bowlegged and his feet would get into the engine cases.

The pegs could be beefed up a bit. Rocks are very unyielding. The pegs mounts are very sturdy.

The seat is very slim, yet comfortable as trialers go. It seems to be a solid piece of foam material rather than covered stuffing. Seating position isn't bad at all for a plonker, the bars are well thought out and the standing position is comfortable even for taller riders.

At first, because of the heavier, taller four-stroke engine, the front end seems to plow in tight turns. As the rider gets more familiar he seems to adjust his body control and the plowing tends to go away. The factory team has brought the head angle in another degree and they say they like it better that way. We rode one and have to agree. It turned sharper and with less effort.

Nice things to say about the brakes. They don't fade when wet. They're strong with a progressive feel. Top rubber boots gave them good ratings, better than Spanish efforts.

Suspenders? Good. The forks, most likely with fish oil in them, were picked as the best yet from Japan. They didn't seem to be quite as soft or have quite as much travel as the Betors on Buls, the standard for comparison. We changed the

fork oil, not without incident, and used some 20-weight Bel Ray. Noticeable improvement. It firmed things up just enough so the forks wouldn't bottom. They worked better on the stutter-bumps, too.

The owner's manual advises caution when changing the fork oil. Heed the warning. Know how the fork tops were changed on the Elsinores this year? No simple bolt in top, but rather the clips and the press - down - until - the - top - pops bolts. Travel and damping are both good. Honda de-squeaked them, a nice touch, by fitting a buffer material between the springs and shock body. Honda one-upped Betor by going to a stouter shock shaft. A good expert or a clumsy novice can bend the Betor shafts. The Honda shafts stayed straight even during some rather spirited loop riding. The shocks withstood moon-shot-type cowtrailing jump landings and such, and didn't die on us. They are good



National Number Four, Mark Eggar.

- out routine. It's the same on the things. Some trials shocks don't last TL. A top sprung off with enough force to leave a two-inch cut on the neck of our oil changer. Be sure to work on only one fork leg at a time. Don't remove both clips. And don't get in front of the line of fire.

The shocks, mounted in good and tight to the bike, slip over the frame and swingarm mounts and are held

very long with hard trail riding.

Typical trials tack-ons. The chain tensioner is positioned nicely. Maybe it could use a stronger spring. The chain guide, toward the rear of the swingarm, was rock destructed. It's too vulnerable. A lot of the boggers take them off. Snail cam chain adjuster makes life easy. Typical on with a couple of Phillips head tack-ons missing and who needs

them or uses them anyway: no speedo mounted on fork leg or downtube, no lights, no swingarm chain oiler.

In certain situations the Honda's bulk may actually help. The weight and the good suspension let it hunker down over the rocks, giving a very stable straight-line ride. The weight along with the thumper power pulses help on wet or off-camber surfaces.

Southern California trials are noted for their full lock, tight turn sections. Trials in other areas of the nation seem to favor the straighter, wider, damper "English"-type sections. In these the Honda's weight disadvantage could prove to be minimal, if a disadvantage at all. It's the tight terrain requiring maximum body English that makes the Honda rider have to work more.

You may have seen the TL ads. They stress the duality of the bike. Sammy Miller climbing boulders in trials and Joe Rider hitting the trails. A lot of people like four-stroke trailers. At 238 pounds wet it's light as a trailbike, will go anywhere and is just plain boss for going up, over, under or through stuff off the beaten path. With a bigger tank and sit-down seat, a little taller gearing, maybe an XL250 or 350 gearbox, it could be turned into an embryonic Alpina. Hang on some lights and boogy to the checkers.

You can't go out and buy Marty Smith's Elsinore, not yet anyway, but the Trials Team is competing on modified stock TLs. Titanium bolts, probable titanium engine parts, plus lighter hubs probably cut about ten pounds off the weight. Other (anybody-can-do-them) modifications in-



Team manager Bob Nickelsen.

HONDA TL250

PRICE: (retail, approx.) Not set at press time ENGINE TYPE: Four-stroke, four-valve single-cylinder DISPLACEMENT: 248cc BORE & STROKE: 74mm x 57.8mm

BORE & STROKE: 74mm x 57.8mm
COMPRESSION RATIO: 9.1:1 claimed
CARBURETION: 24mm Keihin
CLUTCH: Wet, multi-plate

PRIMARY DRIVE: 3.26:1 TRANSMISSION RATIOS:

1) 3.00:1 2) 2.29:1

3) 1 59 1

3) 1.59:1 4) 1.04:1

5) 0.75:1

FINAL DRIVE: 4.07 ratio, 428 chain with thicker plates

14-tooth countershaft 57-tooth rear sprocket AIR FILTRATION: Oiled foam ELECTRICAL SYSTEM: Points,

flywheel magneto LUBRICATION: Wet oil sump RECOMMENDED FUEL: Premium or regular (with octane of 91 or better)

RECOMMENDED OIL: SAE 10W-30, 1.8 liters (1.9 quarts)

FUEL CAPACITY: 3.8 liters (1.0 gallons) FRAME: Mild steel

SUSPENSION: 18.0cm travel

10.4cm travel (4.1 inches); measured at the rear axle

WHEELS & SPOKES:

D.I.D. alloy, shoulderless TIRES:

2.75x21 4-ply Nitto Trials 4.00x18 4-ply Nitto Trials DIMENSIONS:

Wheelbase: 134.7cm (52.5 inches) Clearance: 26.3cm (10 ¼ inches) Seat Height: 71.8cm (28 inches) Handlebar Width: 82.7cm

(32 ¼ inches)

Weight: 108.0kg (238 pounds); weighed with oil and one gallon of gas 45.0% on front wheel 55.0% on rear wheel

BRAKES:

Cable-operated, front and rear INSTRUMENTS: None LIGHTS: No, optional kit available SILENCER: Yes SPARK ARRESTOR: Yes PRIMARY KICK: Yes WARRANTY: Six months PARTS PRICES:

Not available at press time

clude removing the side panels and the heat shield, gearing changes (rider preference), and using either the XL250 or XL350 flywheels. The 250 provides about 1½ more pounds of flywheel, the 350 about 2½ pounds. We rode one of the bikes with an XL350 flywheel — it bolts right in, we were told — and it makes the TL slower and even smoother. They've also tried a smaller 22mm carb which gives better response right off the bottom.

Continued on page 108

UPDATING THE '74 CR125



Many bizarre people came out to help illustrate this article (left to right: Don Draz, Raymond Lopez, Dave Miller).

It started very simply and logically. Given that there are a lot of '74 CR-125s out there in the world, and given that Southern California is blessed with a large number of bike shops that specialize in CRs. All the '74 owners want to blow off all the '75 CRs. All the hot shops want to sell Honda hop-up parts. Just bring everything together, stir, and let it boil. Right?

Wrong.

It was also supposed to be done in three days. One day at the dyno, two more at the track. Should be easy to set up. Right?

Wrong.

The dyno day didn't work out. Two of the shops refused to let their machines be wrung out by the big pump; "Dyno readings are bullshit," sez they. We agree that dyno readings can be misleading (see Gunnar's expose elsewhere), but with interpretation, the data are valuable (data are, datum is, folks). We talked one more bike onto the dyno.

At least riding should be easy. Get a couple of experts, a couple of in-betweens and a scattering of klutz-types on them and compare notes. But the CPW bike blew up and since CPW had borrowed it 713 New Ways to Spend Money

KIT BIKE SHOOTOU

the Staff of DIRT BIKE



The Flying Machine Factory bike got the nod for having the most all at once; it was also the most comfortable mount.

from a customer, it disappeared, never to return. That still left DG, the Flying Machine Factory, and CH Industries. But the CH bike was entirely different from the other two; it was tuned for rideability, not pure horsepower. And comparing the FMF and DG bikes was still absurd; one was set up for a 115-pound teen racer, and the other was built for heavier, taller, elderly types.

What happened to all our carefully sought-after, objective subjectivity? It disappeared. "Well, I can get around the track faster on the CH bike and I'm Joe Average." "Oh yeah? I can blow you off every time on the straight with this flying machine." "Yeah? You wanna go 40-minute motos?" "Give me a Marx Big Wheel and a DG engine and I'll blast by you both." Back and forth. Up and down. We actually never ever had more fun than on those bikes.

But we certainly couldn't come up with any scientific-sounding conclusions. So we decided not to compare apples and oranges and dry-roasted cashews. You do it. Get everybody on your block together and one of you get a DG, let someone else contact FMF or CH or

CPW. Let us know who blows off whom.

Meanwhile, here's a whole bunch of new CR-125 products:

	FMF	DG	CPW	СН
ENGINE radial or porcupine head Webco head porting radical porting crank & rod	\$60.00 50.00 95.00	\$39.95 45.00 125.00	\$49.95 44.99 50.00 54.99	① 44.95 60.00 85.00 39.95②
PIPE low pipe (mid-range) low pipe (horsepower) high pipe	③ 54.00 68.00	48.95 69.95	49.95	54.95 54.95 75.00
CARB 30mm Mikuni 32mm Mikuni intake manifold air box air box boot	34.95 37.95 7.95 39.95 ^⑤ 6.95	33.95 ① 6.95 5.95	39.95 ⁴ 44.95 ⁴ 7.99 29.95 7.99	41.00 ① 28.00 ^⑥
TRANS chain kit chain guide machined dogs clutch spring kit Barnett clutch plates	39.95 10.50	8 25.95	80.00 4.99 24.99	42.00 8.00
SUSPENSION FMS swingarm laydown swingarm bronze bushings gas Cerianis Boges Bilsteins Konis & collers shock coolers fork boots	125.00 11.50 104.00	109.95 (4) 109.95 (4) 12.95 54.95 100.00 39.95 7.95	29.95(5) 24.95(5) 11.99 68.95(6) 19.95(15) 14.99	109.00 ③ 75.00 ③ 104.00 110.00
MISCELLANEOUS works tank big seat bars relace wheels	54.00 45.00 19.95 41.00 ®		19.95	14.95 ² 25.00

NOTES: The Flying Machine Factory (1418 West 259th, Harbor City, California 90710; [213] 530-4656): package price on pipe, porting and head work is \$116. CH Industries (7550 Balboa Ave., Van Nuys, California 91406; [213] 787-6298): offers a new pipe, porting, a milled head, a 30mm Mikuni, an air box and a 13-tooth countershaft sprocket for \$189; pick up radical porting and the tab is \$250. Some more addresses: Cycle Products West, 11900 W. Pico Blvd., West Los Angeles, California 90064, (213) 477-0997 and DG Performance Specialties, 5552 La Palma East, Anaheim, California 92806, (714) 639-7020.

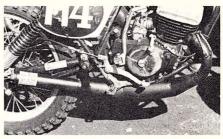
some modifications; this footnote (only \$29.95) and the shortest fuse.



Some people don't recommend The CPW had the cheapest FMS mod

shows who and what.

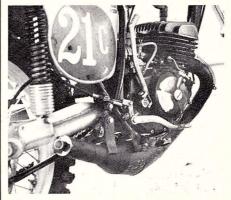
- 2 installed, \$50.
- 3 for '75s, \$60.
- w/clamps, boot, extra jets.
- 5 w/Twin Air.
- w/Uni, clamps, boot.



DG specials: easy to keep on the pipe (either up or down).



Donnie Emler and Marty Smith put a lot into tricking out the FMF 125 Hondas; more than just hot porting and radical piping.



Cliff Hughes' approach is more thoughtful than radical: "You'll go faster if you can go easier." His bikes come on strong and soon, sign off late, shift less.

- 520 chain w/13-tooth countershaft and 48 - 50 rear.
- 8 13-tooth countershaft and 48 -50 rear.
- D.I.D. 520 chain w/13- and 49-tooth sprockets.
- 10 monoshock available.
- 11 weld it yourself kit, \$14.95.
- 12 U.S. Sports.
- 13 kit, \$45.
- 14 w/bronze bushings and grease fittings.
- 15 kit only.
- 16 w/springs.
- 17 Andre's.
- 18 laced, trued, nine-gauge stainless steel spokes.

Stretching a buck is what it's all about these days. A nickel here, a dime there. But why should it put a cramp in your fun? Kawasaki thinks you ought to have a good time getting the most from your dollar. So that's what the G-5 is all about.

A fun way to get from here to there, and get ahead while you're at it.

Whether it's a run to the corner store, or an off-the-beaten-track adventure... the G-5 is made to make it. Its well-mannered 100cc engine is

hooked up to a smooth 5-speed for just the kind of performance and handling you'd expect from a Kawasaki. Responsive and reliable.

And the G-5 is as easy to own as it is to ride. Shop around. You won't beat it. For yourself, your kid, your wife. Or just some good advice for a friend.

The G-5. It'll lower the cost of living it up. Coming or going.

Kawasaki lets the good times roll.

*Manufacturer's suggested list price excluding freight, dealer prep, title, state and local taxes. Price subject to change without notice. Prices apply to U.S. only.

Good times include riding safely. We recommend wearing a helmet and eye protection, keeping lights on and checking local laws before you ride. See the Yellow Pages for the Kawasaki dealer nearest you

Lower the cost of living it up. \$549*



MICKEY THOMPSON'S PARKER 400

Three two-wheelers top four-wheelers

Wayne Cook & Steve Holladay SCORE by JOSEPH CARLSON



Mark Mason and Jack Johnson of Las Vegas led the three bike classes until halfway through the race on their 250 monoshocker. It was the Cook half of the Holladay/Cook Honda team that took over the lead and then went on to pass the four-wheeled part of the competition.



Actually, Malcolm Smith in the Sandwinder he shared with Bud Feldkamp would have won except for busting a wheel, which dropped him back to fourth behind three bikes. Still, Malcolm collected \$9250; Wayne and Steve, only \$2906 for the overall.

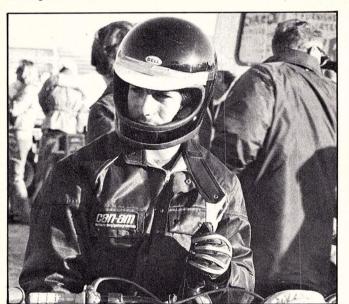
RESUL	TS	
Wayne Cook/Steve Holladay Al Baker/Gene Cannady Jack Johnson/Mark Mason Malcolm Smith/Bud Feldkamp	250 Honda 350 Honda 250 Yamaha Sandwinder	7:14.16 7:15.52 7:16.72 7:30.59
Joe Padilla/Mickey Quade	125 Husky	8:38.96



There were three loops, two in Arizona for 230 miles and one rock-studded 170-mile California run. The California side was easily the equivalent of the first and third loops back in Arizona.



Rolf Tibblin was there — in a number of official capacities: Husky team manager; racer, with Adam Padilla on a 360 Husky; and as chief masseur.





The 125 class was heavy-duty for such a light entry, what with Mickey Quade and Joe Padilla sponsored on a Husky, DeWayne Jones and Andy Kirker on a Can-Am, and the Linqua Harley team out of Glendale. The Hi-Torque representatives had a last-minute change when Preston had pressing plastic business and Gunnar subbed for him.



Al Baker, looking for a repeat win at Parker and a group of points from the SCORE fund (at the end of the year, totals from the Baja 500 and 1000 and the Riverside race are added together), teamed with famous Badger, Gene Cannady, for Parker and later for the Mint 400.

PERSONALIZING THE PURSANG

SPANSH SANITATION by the Staff of DIRT BIKE



Ninety days later

Yes, yes, we know we promised this article about four months ago, but we had to do the Trans-AMA wrap-up, the World Championship wrap-up, the observed trials wrapup, the national enduro wrap-up, and the wrap-up wrap-up.

Besides all that, we forgot; as usual: having too much of a good time riding the thing to want to sit down and write about it.

tuned in to the history of the '75 250 Pursang Mk VIII, we had some problems with it: shifting, stopping, sploosh. Just a touch soft, so we sliding and steering, mainly. In each case, it wouldn't. Not to our Super! With the lesser rate springs satisfaction anyway.

related, so let's take them first. A switch to a Metzeler up front and on the back took some of the slipping out of the steering. The front wheel stopped trying to run away and hide on the other side of the berm. Then we ordered some new springs from Miura Products for the Telescos and in the meantime we ripped some Boges off Charlie's Penton. Since his 250 had moved-up shocks and the Enough apologies; when you last distance was the same, we figured to be in the ballpark.

We were. Now the rear end went switched the 90-pounders for 100s. on the back and the new tire up The steering and sliding things are front, the Pursang was converted to



Some weight was removed by scrapping the Bultaco cable-routers and using tie-wraps from Lakewood. PP fork garters now keep the tubes in shape.

a slider. The front wheel didn't try to tuck in anymore and the back was just fine. We'd suggest 90-pound springs for 150-pound riders, and the 100s for 175-pounders. Got that? Good. Because then the Miura Products 90- to 120-pound progressives came in. Off with the worked so well together that we literally had to rip Zeal off the machine. Bizarre. Especially considering that he can't reach the ground when he's on it.

Later local Puch-sponsored racer Jeff Wright rode the bike and said, 'That's the best bike I've ever you might have guessed, Pomerov has two balls.

Next on was the new shift lever from Miura Products, and back out to the track. No more problems. The new lever is simpler, and you can bend it any way that makes you feel good.

A bunch of detailing followed. We replaced the air box covers with heavier-duty replicas from Rahm Engineering (724 West Anaheim St., Long Beach, California 90813), George installed a brake pedal stop he made, Preston's Hex Grips went on, a C.H. Industries front fender (7550 Balboa Blvd., Van Nuys, California 91406) was added when George ate a fence. We filed the brakes and they work better, but a longer brake arm down on the backing plate seems necessary. The chain tensioner that we haven't installed yet is available from Dickson Sales (1501 W. 48th, Amarillo, Texas 79110) for 20 bucks and bolts right on. And the GP tank - like Jim's, like Bengt's, like you want if you're going to go play all day — is from Steve's Bultaco (7627 Van Nuys Blvd., Van Nuys, California 91405, and University Honda (5908 Roosevelt Way NE, Seattle, Washington 98105) sells an air box cover that Jim

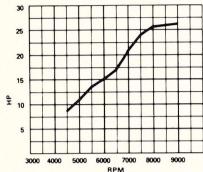
While we have your attention, we'd like to update and/or correct the original test: 12 clutch plates, not 13; 110 or 105-pound springs stock on the Telescos; \$1495, not \$1569; VBA is recommended as well as Shell; 61/2, not 71/2-inch travel at the rear; the dyno chart is around here somewhere (this time); and the weight is 217 with a gallon of pre-mix in it, 45 percent on the front wheel. Sorry about all that.

months now and in that time it's been the single most ridden motorcycle around. As a consequence, we busted the seat's front mount and fiberglassed it together again and snapped off the pipe support that runs up to the back of the frame cradle. And we wore most of the paint off the sides of the tank. That's all that went wrong — which is not

Pomerov swears by.

We've had the Pursang three too shabby.

Especially now that the bike is dialed in for rubber and shock springs, we have to pat ourselves on the back for our original estimate. The Pursang Mk VIII is the easiest 250 machine to go fast on that we've ever tested.

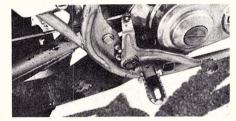




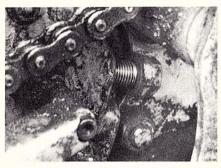
The Rahm Engineering number plates; white, of course. Incidentally, if you keep pushing the fiberglass back into place in the silencer, you'll offend less.

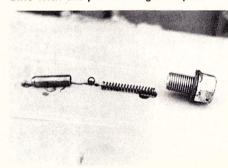


The new shift lever is a lot more straightforward than the stock jobbie. Strange that they didn't do that in the first place.



George whipped up this very sanitary brake pedal stop. Have a friend mark the gusset while you're sitting on the bike with the pedal in a good spot.





Behind that plug lives all this stuff. Putting the ball in increases the tension on the detent and keeps the Bul from popping out of gear.

Boges. Charlie wanted them back anyway. On with the Telescos. Still better. Smack berms. Steer through. Or square corners. Or slide, great swooping powerslides. Anything you wanted.

By now the back end was dialed and the front felt harsh. George turned out to be the culprit. He goes faster than most people and tends to hit things harder. He actually likes to ride that way. He wanted the forks stiffer than stock and had installed a couple of springs as spacers. We took them out and hid them in the back door of his van where they'd rattle around and cause him unending grief.

What a ride! The front and rear

ridden." Ah, sweet success.

Except for the shifting. First we took the bike into a shop — for free, it's guaranteed, remember? - and they found that shift drum we told you about during the test. It worked better, but not good, not yet. Second stop was Bay Area Bultaco, where Skip Kreps fixed it. He's the man that does work for Jim Pomerov and he made a slight mod for us that he also does for Jimmy.

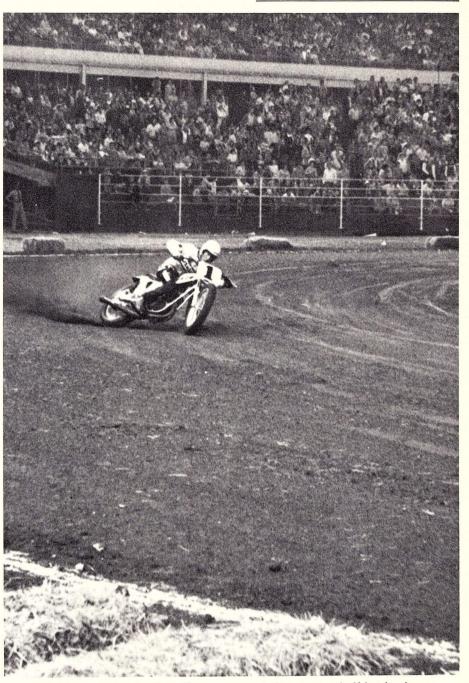
The hot setup here is to take out the swingarm bolt, pull the swingarm out of the way and take out the bolt that positions the shifting detent . . . This is much too hard to describe; look at the photo. One 7/32-inch ball did the trick for us. As

CLASS C OPENER

We slid into Houston for the short track races behind a couple sixers of Pabst Blue Ribbon and a handful of beef jerky. It was a typical muggy, warm south Texas winter day. We were feeling no pain and were planning on a comfortable weekend ... if nothing else, motorcycle racing at the Astrodome is comfortable. You sit in your seat and let the orange-suited attendants bring you the poison of your choice. The mammoth air conditioner does an admirable job of sucking out all the two-stroke fumes, and the exhaust noise echoes back and forth off so many surfaces that it becomes a dull, unnoticeable roar. Not unlike sitar music. The most uncomfortable part of an Astrodome short track weekend is finding your car in the parking lot after it's all over.

If the first short track National of the season was held in a field the way nature intended, without all the amenities, it might draw five or six thousand spectators. As it happened, over 40,000 people crammed into the Eighth Wonder of the World (as the Astrodome's perpetrators would have you believe) for the fun. They had a good time, but not a great time.

The reason I've mentioned the comforts of Astrodome short track is to allow myself a fairly lengthy diversion here to point out that indoor short track is not an inherently comfortable sport. You see, I was born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio; yes, the home of the burning river and the butt of comedians' jokes worldwide, but also the birthplace of indoor short track racing. A fact that, for some reason, the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce



A ho-hum trophy race for Kenny; second place was a half-lap back.

ASTRODOME SHORT TRACK

Story and Photos by PETE SZILAGYI



Roberts on the fast inside line. Romero's wasting time on the outside.

What do Kenny Roberts, Jerry Lee Lewis, Dave Estep and the Eighth Wonder of the World have in common?

NATIONAL

chooses to ignore, or won't 'fess up to.

It was around the late 1950s when the short track races were an annual affair at the Cleveland Arena, home ice for the Barons pro hockey team and where the yearly hot rod show, Shrine Circus, etc. checked in when they came to town. It was also the place where all the big rock and roll concerts were held. The Arena always smelled like stale beer and floor sweeping compound, and when you went to an event there, you figured there was a 50/50 chance you'd get knifed before the night was over. It was a swell place, but not exactly one of your best Wonders of the World. Maybe in the top thousand Wonders, though.

Short track at the Arena was a spectacle. A tenth-mile-long track was set up on boards that covered the hockey ice. Except some of the boards were missing and you could see through to ice. And a peculiarity in the shape of the building caused the track to have to be shaped like an egg instead of a true oval. And since short track motorcycles wouldn't draw enough spectators to pay the bills, a program of midget car races was alternated with the cycle races. And the Arena had a lousy ventilation system, so all the doors were kept open to let the exhaust smoke out. Except it was winter. Both indoors and out. And the smoke still hung around the giant Longines clock on the wall and, as the evening progressed, worked its way down to the seats, then to the floor. Then it was most assuredly time to go home.

Basically, what happened was this: the midget cars would run first and either roll over or blow up their



engines and leave oil all over the boards. Then the motorcycles would all fall down. When the weather was rainy and there was a good crowd of warm human bodies in the stands, moisture would condense on the cold boards and make the track extremely slick and impossible to dry off. The motorcycles would all fall down. Some races had to be restarted ten or 12 times just to get everyone through the first turn. Some of the guys who got bad starts would purposely crash in the first turn to get another chance. Then the arguing and accusations would begin. Meanwhile, the exhaust fumes were burning your eves and some fat guy



Aldana's body has been x-rayed so many times that his bones glow permanently.

smoking a cigar kept telling you to get your boots off the seat in front and to put your cigarette out because there was no smoking.

My description of the exigencies of short track at the Cleveland Arena is not at all exaggerated. It was grim. Amazingly enough, however, those races attracted the very best short trackers of that era. Gary Nixon was a frequent visitor; seems like he'd show up with a cast on his leg every other year, but still rode anyway. Bart Markel came occasionally; Ronnie Rall and George Roeder were regulars. Best of all were the races when Dave Estep showed up. Estep, who had but a brief racing career, was to flattrack what Jimmy Pearsall was to the Boston Red Sox. Dave Aldana at his wildest can't match Estep's reckless bermshots off the guardrails and sidewinding through the pack. Estep could have area aren't getting to watch Speed-



Junior winner Larry Beall; your basic lunatic teen-ager.

been a Grand National Champ if he'd hung in there, but his life probably flashed in front of his eyes one too many times. My fondest memories of the Cleveland Arena are Dave Estep's antics and the evening when I watched Jerry Lee Lewis punt his piano bench 15 yards across the stage.

Back to 1975 and the eighth annual running of the AMA short track National at the Astrodome. Perhaps first, though, we should talk about Astrodome weekend; the short track is but a part of a whole weekend's motorcycling activities.

Astrodome weekend is an institution among bikers from Texas and the surrounding states. There are two main reasons: this is the only chance bike racing enthusiasts in this part of the country have to watch National racing. All the other Nationals are in California or the midwest, or so it seems. In addition, early February is the dullest part of the year and everyone's looking to do something fun for a change.

On Friday night there's a TT National, which I didn't go to because I don't like TT racing; Saturday night is the short track; and there's a Speedway exhibition on Sunday afternoon. Throughout the weekend the Dealer and Accessory Show is going on at Astrohall, next door to the Dome.

Those of you on the West Coast who are familiar with Speedway racing would be bored to tears by Speedway in the Astrodome. The track is too long and there isn't enough passing to make it exciting. Unfortunately, people in the Gulf





Northern Californian Rich Hocking gets a carb rebuild 30 seconds before the



Well, no, he's actually number seven.



Local Yamaha dealer Darryl Hurst won the Gold Cup and the national point lead







Guy McClure and James Rawls.



Louisianian Mike Gerald listens to advice in the pits while his 10,000 screaming Cajuns rattle the Eighth Wonder's rafters.

way as it should be ridden; neither did the folks who watched the CBS Sports Spectacular TV show filmed at the Astrodome Speedway (the cameras judiciously avoided the sparsely filled grandstands).

The Dealer and Accessory Show was a bigger and better diversion than usual this year, mostly because the new Honda 1000 and Suzuki Rotary were on display. A Suzuki mechanic from Louisiana looks at the new Rotary and says to his buddy, "Someday I'm gonna have to do a bottom end job on one a them sumbitches, and I'm gonna tell the

sumbitch that owns it to trade it in on a new one. That bike's for buyin' and sellin', not workin' on!" How pitifully right he is.

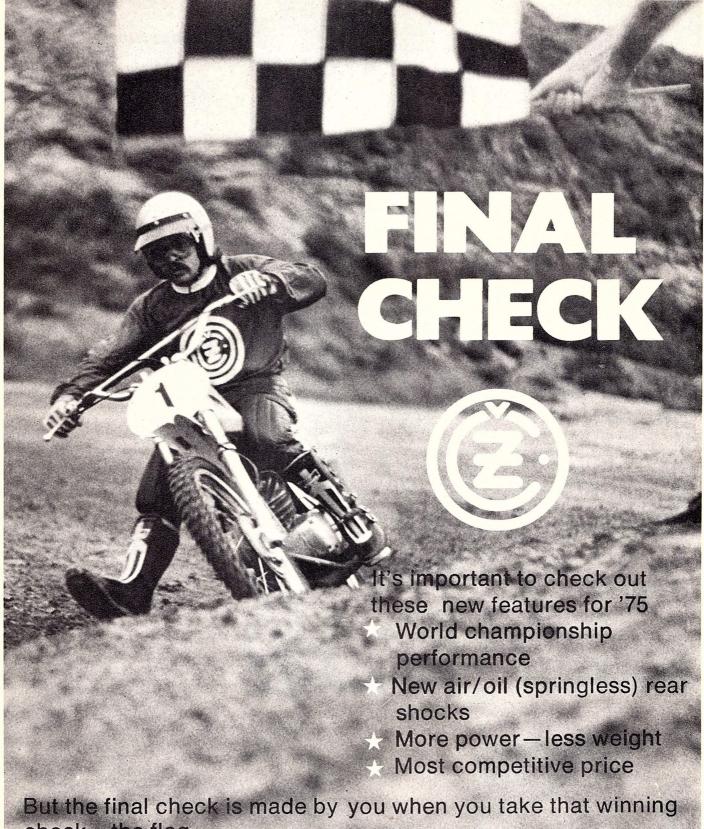
For serious short track spectating, the Eighth Wonder is simply too big. The sport is best appreciated if the watcher is able to get close to the track and observe the in-pack maneuvering and listen to the way each rider is using his throttle. As it is, the only ones who get the full effect are those in the infield and people sitting in the first few rows of seats in the stands. From up above (and the majority of the seats in the Astrodome are way up above) it is easier to keep track of who is in what position, and who is blocking who coming into and going out of corners, but very few of the spectators are true connoisseurs of roundy-round racing and know what to look for.

A recent phenomenon that gives the short track races a lot more atmosphere is Mike Gerald and his screaming Cajuns. A large proportion of the Dome short track's attendance is from Louisiana, since the state is just a couple hours' drive down the highway. Last year they got something to holler about; Gerald, a Louisiana boy, flat laid it on all those fancy factory riders from California. This year Gerald brought several thousand supporters with him and every time his name was announced or flashed up on the tote board, they went bananas. The screaming Cajuns are kind of nice to have around because motorcycle racing crowds have historically been somewhat unenthusiastic (I've seen crowds too drunk to do any more than sit and stare), and the only way we'll ever get national recognition is by having a few racing personalities worth shouting about. Gerald, much to the dismay of his legions, didn't qualify for the National. They will return next year and years thereafter,

To finish up this race report, if that's what it is, let me relate a few impressions I gained at the Astrodome short track National. You don't want a lap-by-lap recount.

1. The winner was Darryl Hurst, a Houston Yamaha dealer and local hotshoe. It wasn't the first time a relative unknown has won a major short track race. This rarely happens in any other type of motorcycle racing.

Continued on page 83



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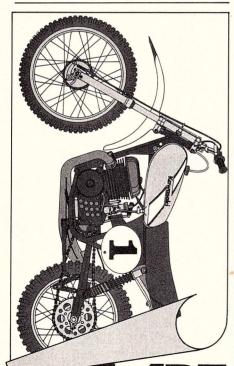
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ASTRODOME from page 81



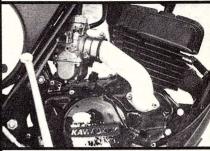
- 2. Kenny Roberts, who didn't qualify for the short track National, but won the Trophy race (a fancy name for a consolation race) easily. as well as the National TT the night before, is truly a spectacularly talented rider. The best I've ever seen (except for Dave Estep, of course).
- 3. Short track riders don't have to do much physical labor to earn their keep. The amount of sheer, calorieexpending physical exertion that Pierre Karsmakers needs to win a 40-minute moto is probably equivalent to the amount of labor necessary to unload three boxcars full of bags of cement. Ditto for a top enduro or Six Days rider. A good short track rider can win the same amount of money in a much shorter time and with a lot less work. Short trackers are the "executives" of motorcycle racing.
- 4. Like executives in all industries, short track racers spend a lot of money on their uniforms. There were some \$500 outfits parading around on the Astrodome floor. Bates and ABC are the Brooks Brothers and Petrocelli of the motorcycle industry.
- 5. For an artificial, indoor, laidover-concrete dirt track, the oval at the Astrodome was beautiful. Harold Murrell, builder of said track, is a

6. Despite the fact that I may not sound too excited about short track racing and the Astrodome in this article, I fully intend to go back next year, and the year after.

7. If you plan to make it to an Astrodome weekend, better hurry. Down here in Texas we have it on good authority that Houston is slowly sinking into the Gulf of Mexico. Come on down a couple days early and we'll wave goodbye to the Manned Spacecraft Center.

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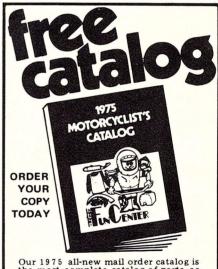
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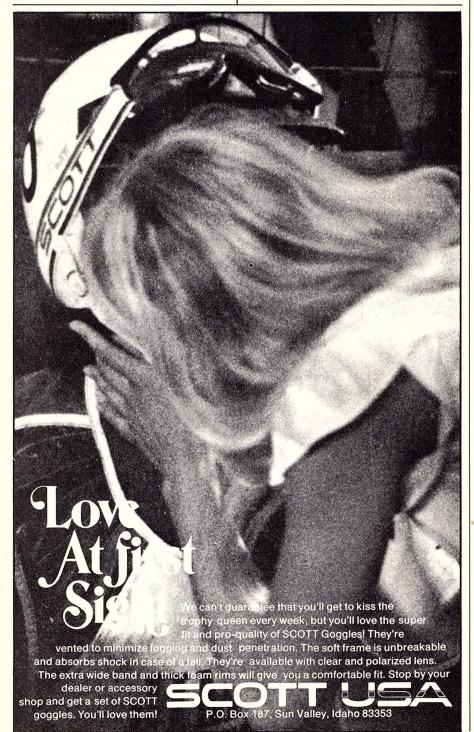
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BITS & PIECES from page 8

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Dave Thomas in Chardon, Ohio, sent us the following submission for the 1975 DIRT BIKE Calendar Mistake Counting Contest.

Lincoln's birthday is on February 12, not the 11th.

Washington's birthday is on February 17, not the 18th.

Ash Wednesday is on Wednesday, February 12, not Thursday, February 27.

Passover is on March 27, not the 26th.

Easter is on March 30, not April 13.

Good Friday is March 28, not April 11.

Memorial Day is May 26, not the 27th.

Rosh Hashanah is September 6, not the 5th.

Yom Kippur is September 15, not the 14th.

Veteran's Day is October 27, not the 22nd.

Thanksgiving is November 27, not the 21st.

Then Dave tried to tell us that Columbus day is on October 12, rather than October 8. Actually it's on October 13. He also missed the misspelling of Danny Hockie's name for the November photo caption. Another Buckeye, Martha Rice, pointed out we didn't even list Valentine's Day and Hanukkah. Dave told us his boot size but he forgot his AMA number and, anyway, we didn't promise to give any boots away. We just asked for boot size. Try MXA. They just gave a pair of boots to someone named Wanda.

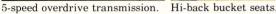
Glenn Patron, often referred to by some as Puerto Rico's answer to Carl Shipman, whoever he is, sent us a new product release for the 1975 DIRT BIKE Buyer's Guide that the staff has tenderly assembled. (Pass the ketchup.) It went on sale May 6. The 80-80 Super Sprocket was developed by Dr. Ludwig Schweinfurth and will retail for \$125 with a plain gray finish. Add ten dollars for rider's name in red. Full details don't appear in the Buyer's Guide. We

Continued on page 88

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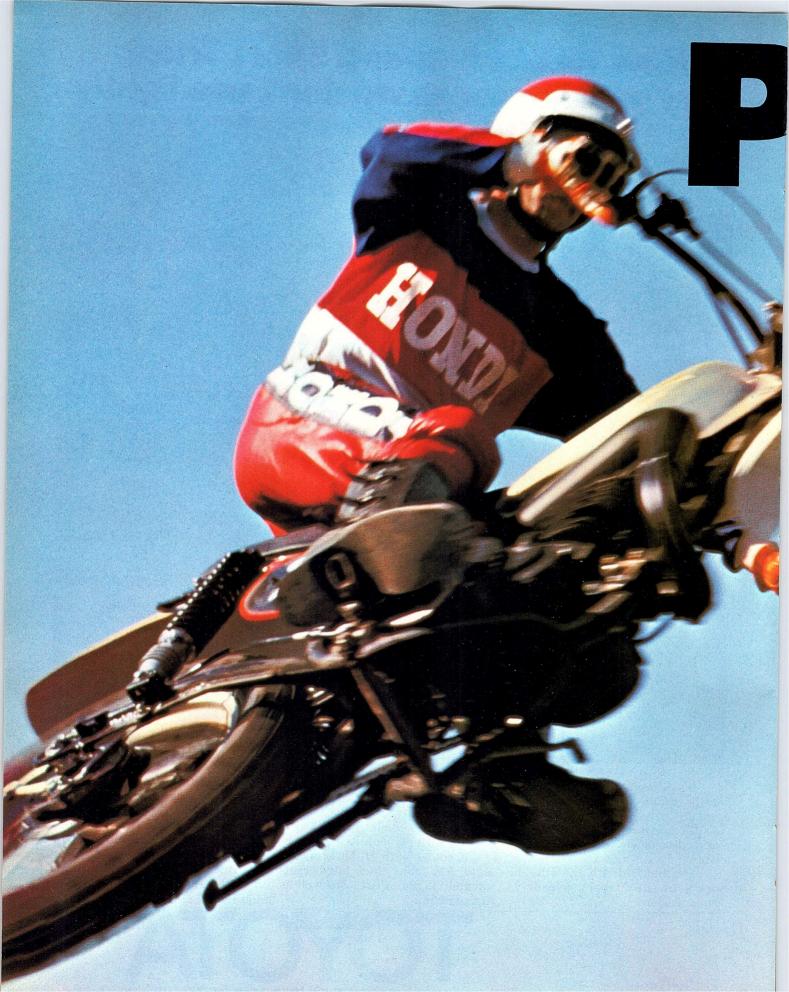
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another version of a hot motocross bike. It's a bike with improvements that will make people who have already won on the Elsinore 250 ready and raring to race the Ml model.

The CR-250M1 has more horsepower this year. More torque. More response. And great new styling that will never go unnoticed.

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famous for hugging the berm, toeing the line and eating up motocross tracks across the country. A bike that's been bagging wins like it was a habit.

Little things have been changed, too. Small—but important. For example, now there's an optional USDA-approved design spark arrestor/muffler so you can take to the woods when you're not racing, and know you're going easy on the environment.

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good one.

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BITS & PIECES from page 84

forgot and left it out. Watch New Products



For all of you who have written in wondering what the plush, well-lit, high-zoot, padded offices of the DIRT BIKE staff look like. From left to right: Chet, Len, Gunnar and Don. George was in the back of his van when this photo was taken.

Still confused over Ash Wednesday being on a Thursday? PABATCO seems to have mastered such trivial undertakings as putting a calendar together accurately. It's in full color, called the Gravel Rash Calendar. It features Joel DeBear, first introduced in the California Trailbike Guide and seen subsequently in Dirt Rider Magazine. With one of these, the last eight months of the year won't be a totally confused mess.

Quotes of the Month.

"How do you spell trail? I'm serious."—Chet.

"I'm gonna bust this phone." — George.

"Let's do a story on side tracking." - Len

Continued on page 90





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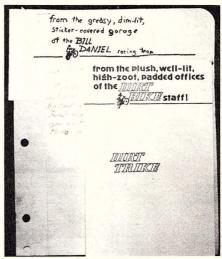
BITS & PIECES from page 88

"Any of you guys know when the next full moon is?" — Lawrence Talbot

"I'd love to get shortdistanced." — DB switchboard operator

"I got lost right after the first check, I tell you. How else do you lose 550 points?" — Anonymous "I don't send Christmas cards.

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More playger...copying, this time from Bill Daniel. Compare Bill's bumbling scratchings to our official personal memo pads. Who does your art work, Bill? Mona Gorilla?

A reader in Salt Lake City sent us the DIRT TRIKE stickie suggestion. We'd tell you his name only George's rhino got into the files.



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So you're getting into trials and naturally the first thing you want to do is start changing things. Now your next question is: help. Or, who makes what I need, and what is it exactly that I need? In short, what's prank.

If you join up with a local trials association all you gotta do is ask the experts. But suppose you don't even know if you have a local trials association. Try sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the North American Trials Council, 4523 E. 18th Avenue, Denver, Colorado 80220. They'll fill you in on the competition scene in your area. The N.A.T.C. was formed last year and put together the national trials championship series for the AMA. There is another nine-event series this year.

There will be an international event in Rhode Island on July 20. For more information contact Dave Russell, Clerk of the Course, Burlingame Road, Esmond, Rhode Island 02917.

The trials accessory market isn't really what you'd call a burgeoning industry yet. One or two brands to choose between is the norm. That's a break. How about the hotshoe who has to decide between 15 different pipes for his new 125 Zoot Rocket?

Here's a rundown on some of the things you should be thinking about once you've decided to be observed going slow.

HELMET

Yes, helmet. Sure all the ads show the shoes climbing mammoth rocks in stroker caps, but they know what they're doing. The FIM requires helmets for European competition. Admittedly, a Star doesn't really make it for trials. Bell has the RT Utility helmet that doesn't cover the ears of riders capable of discerning between engine speeds of 17 and 19



rpm. It goes for about \$30 and it's what most of the guys who wear helmets wear.

The RT Utility was not designed specifically as a motorcycle helmet. The hang glider guys buy 'em and the trials riders have picked up on them. In fact, according to Bell, they are distributed by two hang glider outfits — your motorcycle dealer can't order them directly from Bell. Check the list at the end of this article for addresses of the distributors.

There's a new hang gliding helmet available. It's manufactured by DynaSoar and is called the Dyna-Helmet. It looks like a conventional helmet except that it has openings over both ears. It meets Z-90 standards and goes for \$29.95. It can be ordered from Dyna Tops.

BASH PLATES

A lot of the boggers make up their own to get more protection (particularly for the cases) than the stock plates provide. Renthal makes an alloy number. The Preston Petty Plastic bash plate works on several bikes. Fun'N'Fast makes steel plates for the 125 Honda and the Yamaha and Suzuki. Graham's Sheet Metal makes a plate for Yamahas. Steve's Bultaco has a plate they've designed for the Sherpas. They also handle Renthal bars, Dunlop boots, alloy tanks and Sammy Miller Products. Andre's has a plastic bash plate designed specifically for the Yamaha but it fits on the Suzuki too, and maybe a few other bikes.

Super Bolts has cast aluminum skid plates with side coverage for Yamaha, Bultaco and Montesa. They have an Ossa plate too, and also carry Sammy Miller products, Renthal bars, Dunlop boots and other items. Miura has a new plate for the Sherpas.

SLOW TURN THROTTLE

The Bultaco throttle assembly seems to be the hot setup for those riders with some of the Japanese machines who want to slow things down a bit.

BOOTS

Sure you can wear your MX boots, but most riders favor the Dunlop rubber galosh type (without buckles), the Big Johns (Mick Andrews) or the new Miura trials boot. Hi-Point (Penton) distributes the English Dunlop boot with their name on it. The Dunlops, available from B & B Specialties retail for about \$25 and the Miuras sell for \$55. Big Johns run around \$85.

GLOVES

Motocross gloves will do. Big T gloves are distributed by Knobby Shop International. Knobby distributes a wide selection of European trials accessory equipment as well as ISDT and MX gear. Trials accessories include: English jumpsuits, Belstaff suits, Big John boots and gloves, Dunlop boots, Renthal alloy bars and skid pans, Girling trials shocks and springs and other assorted items.

CATALOGS

Knobby Shop International, P.O. Box 1592, La Jolla, California 92037. One dollar. Free to trials clubs or dealers.

B&B Specialties, P.O. Box 9364, Marina del Rey, Ca. 90302. 75¢.

Super Bolts, P.O. Box 362, Oakland, New Jersey 07436. Free.

RAIN SUITS

The Barbour and Belstaff are traditional. A lot of the fellows like the Full Bore. Almost anything that will keep you dry will suffice, even builders are also into rain gear now. So's Bultaco (Miura). Mick Andrews is now wearing the Europa suits with a trials bend. made in England, where else?

TIRES

Two-ply English Dunlops have been the preferred rubber for years. Two-ply because its more flexible side walls provide more traction. English Dunlops have "Made in England" stamped on the side and vary from the Japanese-made Dunlops. Lately the new Pirelli (not to be confused with the old Pirelli), is gaining favor. It's wider than the Dunlop. Everybody uses the trials universal pattern. Knobbies offer less traction at slow speeds and aren't considered the hot setup.

HANDLEBARS

The hollow aluminum Renthals, if you can get them. They run from \$15 to \$18 and they may be hard to come by. A good trials rider will sell his soul for some Renthals. If you get them, don't forget to radius the outside edge of the bar clamps so they won't cut into the aluminum bar as it flexes. Graham's Sheet hollow aluminum trials bars and Malcolm Smith has aluminum J-Bars

SHOCKS

Sammy Miller Girlings (he reworks the damping) and long travel Telescos got mentioned most. Koni does not make a trials shock per se.

FILMS

Suzuki has a 20-minute film featuring British champion Gordon Farley. Interested clubs can obtain it through their Suzuki dealer at no charge.

FLYWHEEL BOLT-ONS

General consensus is that the new Japanese trialers need some more flywheel. B & B Specialties has bolt-ons to slow things down in the rev department for all three Japanese two-strokes. They run about \$35 and add over a pound of flywheel weight. They also offer the entire Sammy Miller products line which includes his high boy frame, seat tank combinations, fork oil, sprocket kits, wheels, rear hub assemblies. brake shoes, shift levers, air boxes

Saran Wrap. The big four bike Metal distributes two different and Mikuni carburetor kits for all three Spanish makes.

BOOKS

Read all about it. Sammy Miller on Trials is available from B & B Specialties for \$5.00. Just in case you never heard of Sammy Miller, shame on you, he's living legendsville. Carl Shipman's How to Ride Observed Trials Just For Fun! is available from the Dirt Rider for \$6.25. Escape by Trail Bike gets into trials-type riding even though the title says trail. You can get it from Cycle News Products for \$3.75 plus 50¢ shipping. Knobby International sells Max King's Motorcycle Trials Riding for \$5 95.

Check with your Suzuki dealer about obtaining a 16-pager written by two-time British champion Gordon Farley.

ADDRESSES OF PEOPLE MENTIONED

Andre's 3515 W. Alameda Burbank, California 91505 (213) 845-9472

B & B Specialties P.O. Box 9364 Marina del Rev. California 90302

Continued on page 97

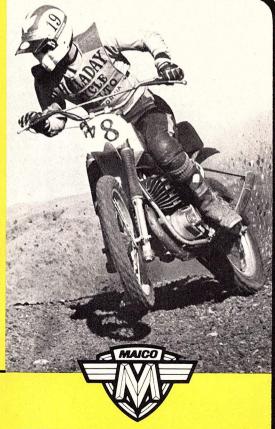
Rex Staten won 29 out of 29 on a Maico, then switched to another make. He's back now.

You bet Rex Staten is back on a Maico. He won all of the last 29 races he entered in 1973, while riding for Holladay cycle. Out of the 95 races entered in 1973. Rex had 76 wins!!! The next year he tried another popular brand and had only 24 wins all year. In the first two months of 1975, Rex and his Maico entered 15 meets and won twelve! He came close on the other three for 100% finishes. In fact, Staten's Maico also finished EVERY race he entered in 1973 ... that's MAICO RELIABILITY.
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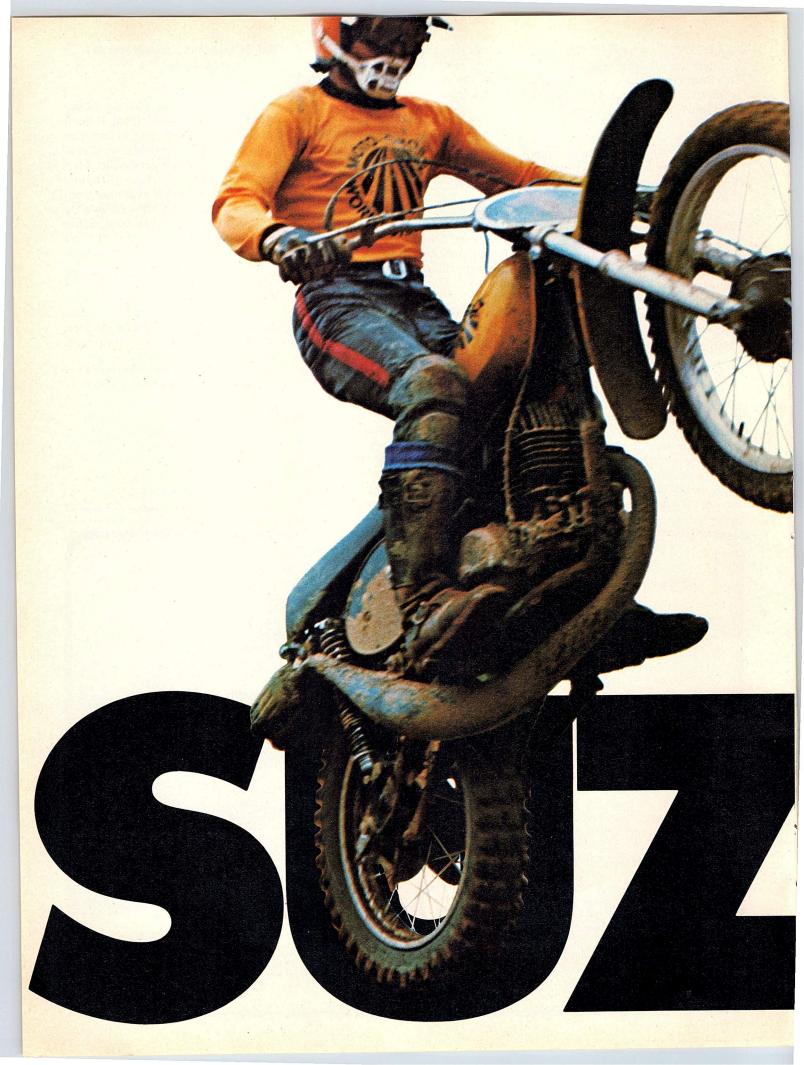
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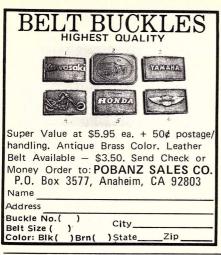
U.S. Suzuki Motor Corporation, Dept. 7061, Santa Fe Springs, Calif. 90670.

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EXPERT Continued from page 10

conditions?

2. Will the high-compression head raise the compression too much or increase head temperature too much for the riding conditions?

3. What carburetor adjustments would be necessary with these

modifications?

4. What caused the detonation with the high-compression head? I experimented with needle settings, but not main jets as they were not available then.

I realize this is a lengthy letter with many questions, but I sincerely appreciate any advice you can offer.

Sam Hill

Ft. Meade, Maryland

Either keep the stock head or try a Webco-type (larger fin area) head. Next I would raise the exhaust port 1.5mm and put on a Torque pipe. You've got the right idea on the rest of the cylinder. Don't forget to retard the timing a bit - higher compression — less advance — like two pts. $C/R = \frac{1}{2}mm$.

FORK FITS

I own a Yamaha 250 Enduro, '72 version, and like all the Yammies the front forks leave much to be desired. What "El Cheapo" way would you suggest for MX?

In most all the books it seems that the hot setup is forward mounted shocks. But I haven't seen anything at all on how to set up a Yamaha. In other words, a do-it-vourself WORKS bike at home. Will there be any articles on this in the future? It seems that everything is geared to the bigger bikes on the forward shocks. What is your opinion on the shocks?

Mike Brooks Smyrna, Georgia

I have gotten so many requests about FMS for a variety of machines it seems worthwhile to write an article on the problems involved especially shock angle-placement springs, rates, etc. I will try and have it done and explain dampening too by next month.





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Malcolm Smith Racing Products P.O. Box 1086 Riverside, California 92502 (714) 686-1006

Steve's Bultaco 7627 Van Nuys Blvd. Van Nuys, California 91405 (213) 780-6300

Ultralite (Bell RT helmets) 137 Oregon Street El Segundo, California 90245

Things like Preston Petty plates, Barbour and Belstaff suits and Dunlop and Pirelli tires at your local dealer. You can find Miura boots and rain suits at your local Bultaco dealer, Hi-Point boots at your Penton dealer and Full Bore suits at your Ossa/Yankee dealer. When you write for catalogs, don't forget to tell 'em DIRT BIKE sent you.

SOLICITATION

If you're a trials accessories distributor, manufacturer or mail-order retailer and we've missed you, drop us a line, c/o Trials Editor, and let us know what you're into. We'll pass the info along in a future issue.

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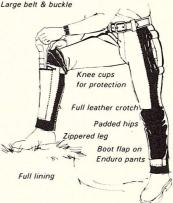
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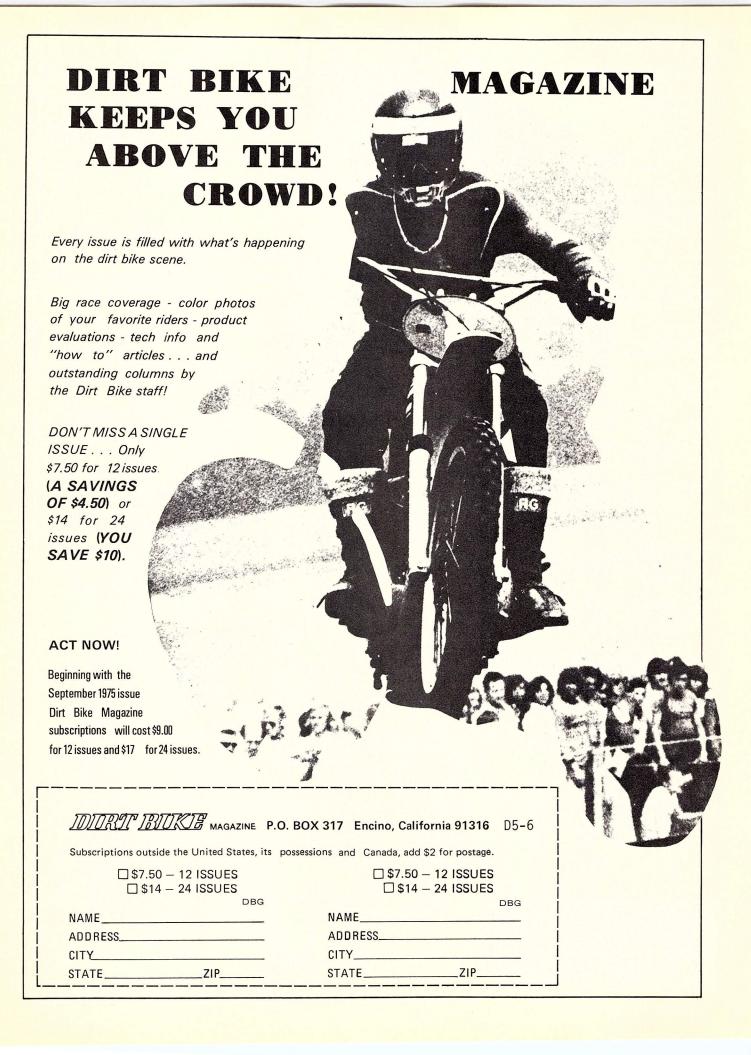
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HOLESHOT Continued from page 12

are very, very lucrative. But if there weren't, people wouldn't be repeating them. The amount of money that has to be laid out to open the front gate at most racetracks is considerable by the time you've bought the insurance, had your advertising, prepared the track, have the personnel there to work, and then after the event there is a considerable amount of money that has to be paid such as prize money, trophies — the average weekly event runs about \$2500. In many cases you might be looking at a \$3000 gross, which means there is only a \$500 profit margin, which doesn't go into my pocket. It goes into the corporation, and all the bills are paid out of that. We have concentrated on having a volume of events to keep the wheels in motion.

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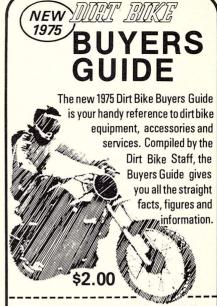
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point of telling the rider why he's been disqualified. He is the first one to be told of the disqualification and the reason. One thing that has helped myself and Kelvin both is that both of us raced for fun and for a living for many years. We've always looked at it from a rider's viewpoint as well as a promoter's. We want to be fair with the riders from the start of the race to the checkered flag, giving the riders the full benefit of a well-prepared track, a well-organized event and officials that know what they're doing.

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"We've put in a lot of time, a lot of

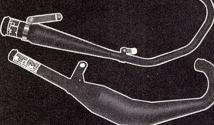


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DIRT BIKE

hard work. Kelvin and I, for example, did the entire original layout of the Carlsbad course, 90 percent of which was used for the 1974 Hang Ten Grand Prix. That basic layout was done over five years ago, and not only did we do the layout, we physically put up all the snow fencing on the entire track circumference inside and outside at the time. We spent many, many



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"The CMC has no hopes of ever becoming the only one in the United States. Competition breeds a good program, and you never get lazy and lay back and say 'Well, if you don't like the way we're doing it, don't ride.

"We are striving to be a very good Number Two, and when you're Number Two I guess you work a lot harder than Number One. As far as sanctioning groups in the United States, we have some good programs to offer right now. We still in the near and distant future will be revising these programs and will be coming up with new programs so we can compete very well.

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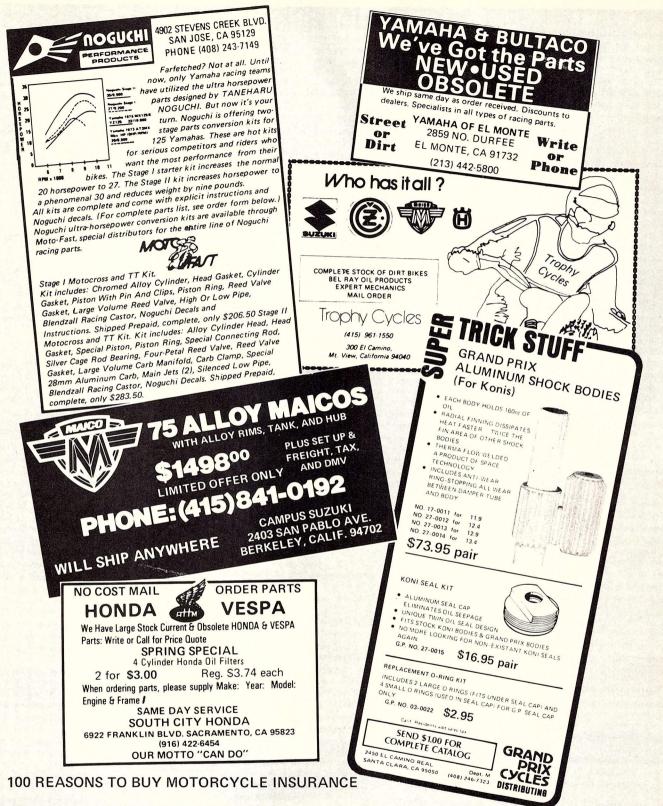
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CHECKPOINT Continued from page 5

R & D efforts. What do they want? They want the same thing: some-

They want the same thing: someone with natural talents developed by education or experience, or someone with the ability to apply themselves wholeheartedly and still bring insight from other fields into the job.

It totals.

And what it sums up to is a part of the American system.

It is the belief that you can be anything you want to be, as long as you're willing to give up some other things.

And I'd like to add that you're more likely to succeed if you can do at least two things.

Why should Honda or Suzuki hire you as a rider when the only thing you can do is berserk it from corner to corner, blow your motor or suspension and pull in to say Boy, this thing is burnt? Think of Tony DiStefano. After years of practice, hard riding, and constant working on his own machinery, he can ride a bike that isn't working well, not give up because of that, and still have enough cool left after blowing a race to be able to tell the mechanics where to start looking for the problem.

Think of Preston Petty. The whole time everyone was saying he was the fastest rider in the U.S., he was studying. By the time he was 30, he had his own business. A big business. Only because he was able to apply what he learned racing to what he learned while studying. He was a computer programmer who used that knowledge to design machines to build bike products cheaper and better than anything else available.

Think of Jim Felt, a good rider who always did his own bikes. When circumstances made it impossible for him to ride, he already had the mechanical knowledge necessary to turn his talents in a new direction.

Think of DG's Gary Harlow. He had built a big business out of renting heavy construction equipment and then discovered riding. He applied everything he had to the new direction, all the business talent, all the construction techniques, and all of himself. That's what counts.

Think of Al Baker too. He raced Hondas and got to know them inside out. Everytime something bothered him about the bike, he applied intelligence and cured it. It's to the Honda owner's benefit (their bikes

Continued on page 106



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Join now . . . encourage your friends to join. Start a racing club . . . future plans include sponsorship of regional motocross races.

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I am turned on . . . please enroll me as a member of the International Motocross Association. I have enclosed my \$6.50 for Charter Membership.

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CHECKPOINT

Continued from page 104

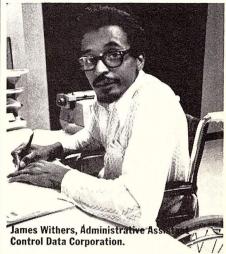
are better afterward) and to his benefit (they paid him to make the modification).

Do you get the idea?

Think about what you do the best. Improve that by constant practice and persistent education. Give up a little fooling around. Get dedicated. You'll find yourself a more valuable — and more valued — person for it.

And one of the neatest things you'll find once you get to do what you've always wanted to be is that our sport is young enough that everyone around you, like yourself, works so that there is either a primary goal or a principal side effect of their work: the end result makes it better for all of us. That and nothing else - is the best reward you can ask for.

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Everyone can enter . . . anyone can win!

The staff will select the winners, using composition, presentation, subject material, tastefulness and what kind of mood we're in while we're judging as the criteria. Funny letter will help. But not a lot.

Prizes will be awarded for Best Photograph (color or black and white), as well as for the Best Enduro, Best Motocross, Best Observed Trials, Best Desert, Best Speedway, Best Flattrack, Best Short Track, Best Crash & Burn and Best Just Plain Riding Shots.

That's ten prizes . . . and only time will tell what they will be, but we will be giving away some really good photographic stuff. Watch for the list of prizes in our next issue.

The best part is that we're going to publish every one of the photos that we can fit into a special issue called the GYDBRPC PHOTO ALBUM. Wouldn't that be neat to give your aunt on her birthday?

Here're the rules. Black and white entries must be 5x7 or 8x10 glossy, unmounted prints. Color entries must be 35mm or 2½ mounted transparencies (slides). Technical data would be nice. Send it all to Photo Contest (see coupon below). All entries must be postmarked no later than July 12, 1975. All entries become the property of Dirt Bike Magazine and Hi-Torque Publications, Inc.

ENTER ONCE . . . ENTER THRICE . . . MAKE ANSEL ADAMS CRINGE.

THE GREAT YELLOW DIRT BIKE READERS'PHOTO CONTEST P.O. BOX 317, ENCINO, CALIFORNIA 91316 Enclosed is my entry in the GYDBRPC. TECHNICAL INFO: CAMERA USED: SHUTTER SPEED: LENS OPENING: FILM USED: WHERE SHOT: OTHER IMPORTANT INFO:

Use blank sheet of paper for additional entries

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STEVE'S BULTACO 7627 Van Nuys Blvd. Van Nuys, CA 91405 (213) 780-6300 (213) 994-7468 SALES PARTS HONDA TL250 Continued from page 70

The head angle change of one degree involves a fairly easy (by an experienced torchman) cut-and-weld number around the head of the frame. If you wind up with a TL and want to know exactly how to do it, drop us a line, attention of the Trials Editor.

BITS & PIECES

Four-ply Nitto trials tires. Keep 'em on for trailin', switch to two-plies for serious observation.

Grips were fine, the usual Doherty

Small gas tank opening as on the Elsinores. Same cap with venting tube that tucks into rubber receiver.

Kill switch, off-on-off, mounted in center of bars. Good location for it. Out of the way of acrobatic antics yet handy if the throttle gets jammed into the ground.

Usual good rubber covers on levers and throttle assembly.

One-gallon tank is steel. Fenders are flexible plastic, stand a lot of dropping.

It's a snap to service air cleaner. Remove right side panel held on with triple pronged insert power and Continued on page 111

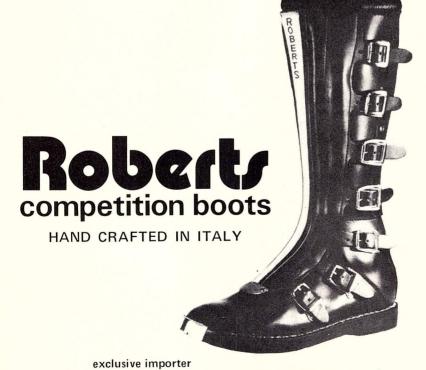


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STUFF

This column is dedicated to the proposition that there are some really swell products floating around that we ought to let you know about. We give you fancified press releases in New Products, but nothing will appear in STUFF that the staff and staff consultants haven't used themselves. Readers are invited to participate. Address your recommendations for product evaluations to STUFF Editor at good ol' DIRT BIKE, where the phoof goes in before the label goes on.



FULL BORE JACKET

Want lady racer types like Squeaky Sawyer to breathlessly lean over the counter and say things like: Wow, a Full Bore jacket. Can I touch it? All you gotta do is be wearing a Full Bore jacket and believe in kismet. The jacket is available in coal black blue or plain old medium blue. It doesn't look anything like the traditional Belstaff/Barbour jacket. Wear it to your prom. First off, no greasy waxed cotton. It's 50 percent nylon, 50 percent Antron. The traditional four pockets on the front aren't there. First glance you can't see any. But there's a pocket on either side, zipped tight behind two vertical pleats on either side of the jacket. There are two more snap button pockets on the inside and an elastic snugger belt.

One thing you can't do is stand around the campfire with your hands in your pockets, unless you cross your arms — right hand in left-side pocket, etc. And then you run the danger of somebody saying: Hey, who's the weirdo in the helmet and the black straightjacket.

There's a foamy-type lining (Tricot foam) to keep you cool or warm and the material is treated to be water repellent. The jacket is washable or can be dry cleaned. Two staffers have 'em, wear 'em, like 'em. If you're interested, drop by your local Ossa dealer or any dealer who carries the Full Bore line of goods distributed by Yankee Motors. The jacket goes for about \$59.50 and you can get a pair of matching pants for another \$46.50 or a full suit for \$98.



MALCOLM SMITH J-BARS

We got an opportunity to try these out when riding Al Baker's Baja Elsinore. (See January, 1975, issue.) Al kept raving about them and they seemed kinda nice, so one of us bought a pair and they still seem kinda nice. In fact, said party ordered a second pair.

Why J-Bars? First they're made out of solid aircraft brushed aluminum. Just like airplanes and blimps. We all know aluminum is light, but solid aluminum J-Bars are actually a bit heavier than chrome moly bars. So what's the sense there? Aluminum flexes. Mild steel and particularly chrome moly are noted for their rigidity. The flexing handlebars actually become an extension of your front end suspension by absorbing front end jolts. The flexing feature is why they don't have any crossbar.

Some outfits offer very light, hollow aluminum bars. Think twice about getting into hollow aluminum except for trials. It's not that strong. One day out at Valley we came upon Puch pilot Jeff Wright with a rather peculiar twist in his bars. His hollow aluminum bar had broken open like a chocolate Easter bunny. Think

about that happening on a fast downhill.

Developed with the assistance of Malcolm Smith, the J-Bars come in ten different configurations including Baja, trials, motocross, scrambles, flattrack, desert and mini racing. You can order them in black or natural aluminum. The bars retail for \$15.95. Order them from your local dealer or shoot some dough to Al Baker Racing and Development, 15174 Raymer, Van Nuys, California 91405.

J-Bars are distributed by Malcolm Smith Racing Products, P.O. Box 1086, Riverside, California 92502. You can order a catalog from Malcolm for two dollars and check out his entire line of products.

One thing to remember, you have to bevel down the outside edges of your handlebar clamps so that the flexing bars don't try to saw themselves in two. Takes a file and about two minutes of your time. Fit 'em up and flex.



KAWASAKI TIRE SEALER

Anybody who goes trail riding, enduroing or desert racing without some kind of tire sealer aboard deserves what he gets - a long, dismal haul back to the pits. We've used the Kawasaki brand sealer several times and it really works. Just shake the can, hook it up to the valve stem and hit the button. The white sealing foam also inflates the tire. Badly pinched tubes or defective valve stems don't take the cure, but plain old everyday punctures are a piece of cake. Tire sealer goes for about four dollars at your local Green dealer.

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color and type of

shirt desired.

HONDA TL250 Continued from page 108 spin one wing nut and pull it out. Foam is slotted to seat into the air box base, so use a lot of grease to get a good seal. Rubber base as on Elsinore filters would be better.

Rear brake lever is serrated and tucked in very closely to avoid rocks. Good design.

Left side cover split to get at the countershaft sprocket. Bolt-on shield protects case if chain breaks.

Handy grease fittings. Swingarm nipple and clutch shaft nipple inside



of the shift lever.

Kickstarter tucks in out of the

Plastic chain guide. Good design, it held up fine.

Pretty silver paint on the frame. TL is set up to accept lights.

Honda probably will offer an optional lighting kit.

The pipe is well tucked in. Only the TL125 is quieter in all dirtdom. Sound is distinctive. Certain Montesa riders have been known to liken it to an asthmatic 60-year-old wino yelling through a beer can.

SUMMATION

The top three number plates in Southern California's A.T.A. said it



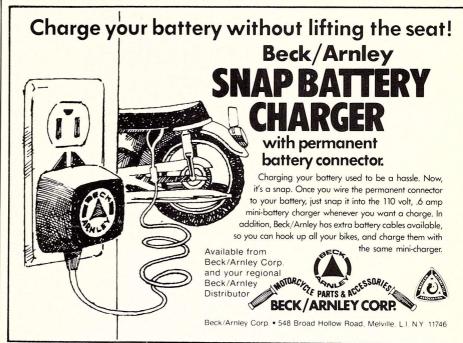
was definitely the best bike to come out of Japan yet. We agree. Every other trials rider we put on it came out saving just about the same thing. So how does it compare with the Spanish bikes? Some placed it fourth behind the three Spanish bikes, some third behind Bultaco and Montesa, some second behind Bultaco. Let's follow the bouncing ball and sing it all together: pretty good for a first

Honda obviously is shooting for two markets with the TL. They could have made the bike lighter for competition. At least one of last year's prototypes weighed under 210 wet, but the bike would not have

been as sturdy for the trailbike market. The frame and the suspension can withstand the pounding of trail riding, and the four-banger is smooth, quiet and tractable. It's an excellent trailbike, suitable for conversion to slower mud-slogging, twisting-through-trees-type enduros.

The TL's weight may keep away some Expert class riders, but the head angle change and the additional XL flywheel weight really improve the stocker for serious competition.

Only other thing we can add is that we really hated to give the TL back. Whether you call it the Lone Thumper or the Brawny Beef Bogger, it kinda grows on you.





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HONDA YAMAHA & Husky parts warehouse. Any part or accessory for street, MX or enduro. Dealers & repair shops welcome. Wholesale & retail. RIFF'S CYCLE CENTER, INC., Rt. 1, Langhorne, PA 19047; (215) 752-0243.



Gordon Jennings' Guidebook to Power. Design Formulas for tuned exhaust, port timing, carb size and much more for the engine modifier. Two Stroke Tuner's Handbook, \$5.00.

HOW TO WIN MOTOCROSS, official book of the Gary Bailey MX School, \$5.95. MOTORCYCLE TUNING FOR

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Red and Yellow Together look so boss, everybody claims 'em, as their colors. And they have a point. As racing colors, Honda Red and Yamaha Yellow do have that Bultaco look. No... the colors look even better on a Husky, Can-Am or a Maico. There's an unmistakable Suzuki flavor that comes across, too. On any bike — from Alsport to Zundapp — you'll be seen in your own Red and Yellow. It's best to not be too far back in the pack wearing this new color combo from Wheels of Man...you're just too...ah...noticeable.

For 1975, Wheels of Man offers Red and Yellow Racing color combinations in leathers, MX Rooster Tail pants, shirts, socks, helmets, equipment bags and much more. See it at your Wheels of Man dealer or send \$1 for full color catalog.



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